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*Short stories and poems for  
children, original and select*

Short stories

46.

1564.





# **Short Stories and Poems**

**FOR CHILDREN,**

**Original and Select.**

**WITH FORTY WOOD-ENGRAVINGS.**



**London:**

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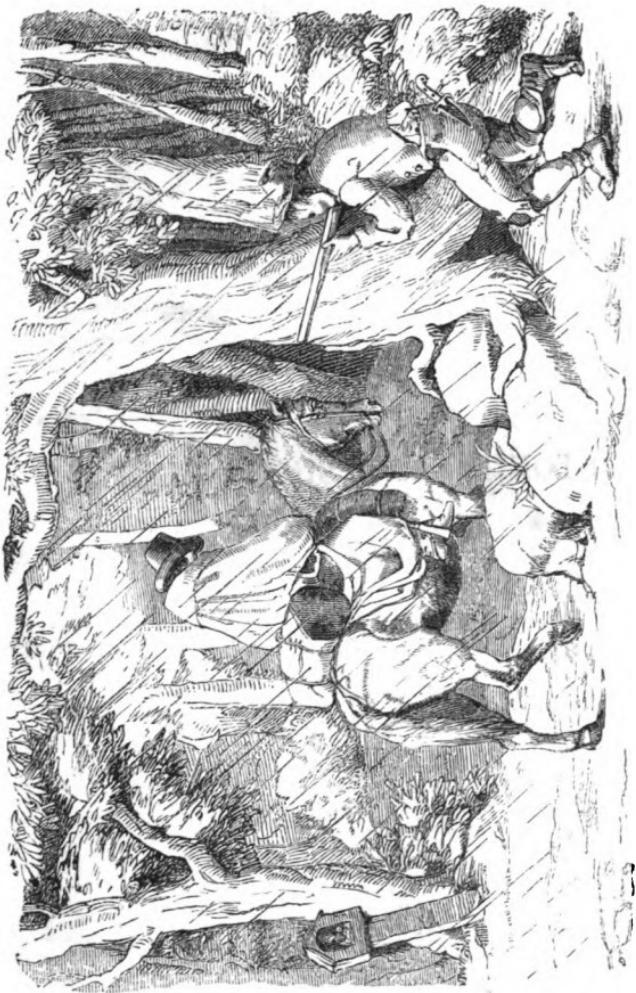
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**STORIES AND SHORT POEMS.**



THE MERCHANT AND THE ROBBER.

## STORIES, &c.

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### The Merchant and the Robber.

 ROBBER with his loaded gun had concealed himself in a forest, waiting for the arrival of a rich merchant, who he knew was to pass that way on his return home from the market, in order to shoot him and seize upon his money. In the mean time a storm came on suddenly, and the rain fell in torrents, which caused the merchant to complain bitterly of his uncomfortable journey. He had got about half way through the forest, still suffering from the violence of the storm, and heartily praying that the rain might cease, when he was startled by a noise not far off; and on looking round, he saw the smoke of the powder from the gun, and the robber himself running off as fast as his legs could carry him. He felt very thankful for his escape; and when he afterwards learned, from the confession of the robber, that it was the rain which had wetted the powder, and thus prevented the gun going off, he clearly saw that what he at first deemed a misfortune, was, in the hands of Providence, the very means of his deliverance.

## The Echo.

EORGE did not know in the least what an echo was. One day when he was out in the fields, shouting and singing, he was surprised to hear his words repeated, as if they came from some one in the neighbouring wood. The little boy then called out, "Who are you?" and immediately he heard the same words repeated by some mysterious voice. George then called out again, as loud as he could, "You must be some foolish boy." "Foolish boy!" replied the voice from the wood. George now began to get angry, and said some very ill-natured things in reply, which were all faithfully repeated by the echo. George then began looking about for the little boy, who he thought was mocking him, in order to give him a beating; but all his search was in vain. So he ran home and told his mother how some naughty boy had hid himself in the wood, and mocked him by repeating his words. "My dear boy," she replied, "you are quite mistaken. It was only your own words which you heard, just as, when you look into a mirror or piece of

water, you see your own face reflected back ; and if you had spoken kindly, you would have received back kind words in reply. And so it is in the world, in our dealings with our fellow-creatures. Their conduct to us is generally an echo of ours to them ; and if we behave civilly to them, they will do the same to us. But if we are rude and ill-mannered, we must expect to be treated in the same way."

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### The Walnut-Shell.

ITTLE Lizzy found in the garden a walnut, the shell of which was quite green. Thinking it was a little apple, she began to eat it; but the first bite she gave, it tasted so bitter that she threw it away. Conrad, her brother, who had more sense, took it up; and stripping off the shell with his teeth, said that he did not mind the bitterness of the husk, for he knew that there was a nice fruit inside, which would more than repay him for all his trouble.

Think, as a recompense for all thy pains—  
Think on the prize the happy victor gains.

### The Roasted Goose.

LITTLE Martin said to his brothers and sisters, "This is my birthday; and this evening we are to have roasted goose for supper." The lights were accordingly brought in; and the happy children were all seated round the table, waiting impatiently for the wonderful dish. The servant came in to tell them that it would be still half an hour before it was ready; and the children then began to cry: but the servant, to keep them quiet, told them there was a great giant coming, who would put naughty children into his pocket, and if they were not quiet, he should have the goose. The children paid no attention to these stories, but made more noise to have their goose. The servant then opened the window, holding out the goose in the dish, and calling "Come, giant, come, and take the goose." At that instant a thief passing by said, with a rough voice, "Many thanks, Mrs. Cook," seized the goose and the dish, and ran off with it as fast as he could. The children seeing this set up a terrible crying, which brought their mother; and when she knew what was the matter, she said, "As for you, children,

you are justly punished for your rude conduct; and, instead of the roasted goose, you must be contented with a basin of soup for supper." To the servant she said, "I have often warned you against deceiving the children; and now, as a punishment for your wicked trick, I shall deduct the amount both of the goose and the dish from your wages."

Prudence and wisdom are the gifts of Heaven;  
By tricks and lying none have ever thriven.

### The Coal-Merchant and the Washerwoman.

 ONE day a coal-merchant said to a washerwoman who was looking out for a lodging, "Come and live in my house, which is large enough both for you and me." But the washerwoman replied, "No, our occupations don't suit; for your coals would soil the linen which I take so much pains to wash and clean." "You are right," said the coal-merchant: "black and white don't agree well together; and to put clean linen among coals is like good people going among bad—they are sure to be soiled and polluted."

If you would pure and happy be,  
The bad and vicious you must flee.

## The Wheat-Stalk.

**A**COUNTRYMEN went to his fields one morning with his little girl, to see how his wheat was getting on. "Look, father!" said she; "look, how some of the stalks stand up, quite straight and tall!—they are the best ones; and look at those others, quite bent down to the ground!—they are good for nothing." The father hearing this, plucked one of the tallest stalks, and said: "Look here, my girl: this stalk, which you think so good because it is so high and tall, is quite empty; while the other, which hangs down so, is full of beautiful grain."



We must not always judge by Appearances.

A GREENFINCH and a nightingale  
Before a window hung,  
And all were pleased to hear the tale  
The latter sweetly sung.  
A little boy who heard the strain  
Would fain the singer see;  
And so his father brought the twain,  
And said, " Now, which is he,—  
Which is the pretty bird whose lay  
Such joy and pleasure brings?"  
The little boy without delay  
Replied, " That's he who sings,  
The greenfinch,—look how bright and gay  
The colours on his wings !  
The other bird, so dull and plain,  
Could never sing that pretty strain."

But the boy was mistaken ; which  
shews that we must not always judge  
by appearances.



### The Masks.



NCE a gentleman gave a grand entertainment, and invited all his friends. In the midst of it, two figures in masks entered the room, of the size of children about five or six years of age, both very richly dressed, one in the style of a young gentleman, and the other as a young lady. The young gentleman wore a scarlet suit, turned up with gold lace; he had on his head a large white wig, and held in his hand a laced hat. The lady had on a dress of yellow taffeta, with spangles of silver; her beautiful bonnet was surmounted by a rich plume of feathers, and she held a fan in her hand. Both began dancing a quadrille, and astonished all present by their graceful evolutions and wonderful agility. In short, the manners and address of this elegant couple were beyond all praise. An old officer, who was one of the party at table, suddenly laid hold of an apple, and threw it to the maskers, who darted on it like lightning, fighting and quarrelling about which should have it. In the contest, the wig, and bonnet, and masks, were torn off; and, in place of seeing two beautiful children, the company beheld a pair

of huge ugly apes, grinning and chattering most frightfully. A burst of laughter broke from all the guests: but the old officer gravely remarked, that “ it was of no use for apes and fools to put on fine clothes; for they were always sure to be found out at last.”

In vain the well-dres'd fop would cheat our eyes;  
The mask drops off, and strips his poor disguise.

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### The Boy and the Nettle.

 BOY, playing in a field, chanced to be stung by a nettle, and came crying to his father. He told him he had been hurt by that nasty plant several times before; that he was always afraid of it; and that now, though he did but just touch it, yet he was most severely stung. “ Child,” said he, “ your touching it so gently and timorously is the very reason of its hurting you. A nettle may be handled safely, if you do it with courage and resolution; if you seize it boldly, and hold it fast, be assured it will never sting you: and so it is with many things in the world;—if we grapple boldly with them, we shall come off unhurt.”

## The Two Bees.

**O**NE fine morning two bees set out in quest of honey: one was wise and temperate, the other careless and extravagant. They soon arrived at a garden enriched with delightful herbs, flowers, and fruits. Having regaled themselves on the various dainties before them,—the one loading himself with provisions for the hive against the winter, the other regarding only present pleasure,—they at length espied a wide-mouthed vial hanging beneath the bough of a peach-tree, filled with honey, and exposed in the most inviting manner. The thoughtless bee, notwithstanding his friend's remonstrances, plunged headlong into the vessel, resolving to indulge himself at whatever hazard; while his companion, suspicious of danger, sipped a little with caution, and then flew off to fruits and flowers, where, by the moderation of his meals, he improved his relish for the true enjoyment of them. In the evening he called upon his friend to see whether he would return to the hive; but found him surfeited in sweets, which he was neither able to leave nor to enjoy. His wings were clogged, and his strength almost spent; so that he was but just able to bid his friend farewell, and to lament, with his last breath, the thoughtless love of pleasure which had proved his destruction.

### The Little Dog.

**W**ALKING by the side of a river, a young lady one day met some wicked children, who were going to drown a poor dog. Taking pity on the little creature, she bought it of the children, and took it home with her. The little dog soon learned to know his new mistress, and would not quit her for an instant. One night, when she was going to bed, the dog set up a terrible barking; and when the lady took the candle to look about and find out the cause, she saw under the bed an ill-looking fellow, who had hid himself there for the purpose of robbing the house, and perhaps killing the good lady. He was soon secured and brought before the justice, who had him properly punished, as an example and warning to all bad men. The lady thanked God for His great goodness in saving her by means of the little dog, and said, "Who would have thought that when I saved him from being drowned, he would one day save me from being robbed and murdered?"

To every bird and beast be ever kind and true,  
And God, whose works they are, will love and care for you.

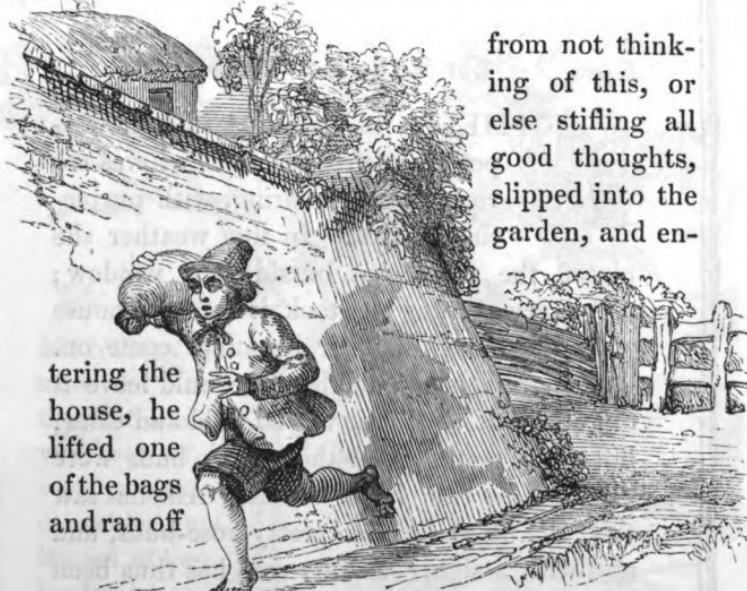


### The Ghost.

PETER once saw two bags of nuts lying in a garden-house. "This is lucky," thought he to himself; and determined to steal them. As it was now daylight, when such tricks are not so easily played, he waited till night, the time for evil deeds; though wicked people forget that the eye of God is on them in the dark as well as in the light. Peter,

from not thinking of this, or else stifling all good thoughts, slipped into the garden, and en-

tering the house, he lifted one of the bags and ran off



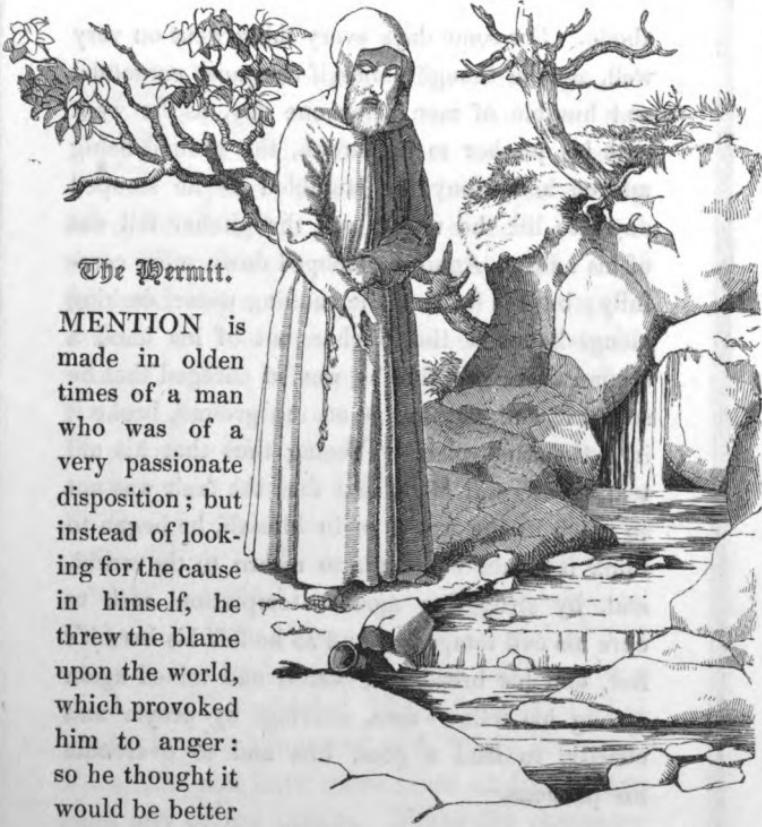
with it. By and by, when the moon shone out a little, he saw, as he thought, another person at his side, carrying the other sack. The figure was large and black; and his guilty conscience made him think it was a ghost. So he ran and ran, as a bad conscience lends wings to the feet; but the black figure still kept up with him. Breathless, and half dead with fright, Peter reached home, having dropped the bag of nuts by the way. But it was soon found that the black figure which he took for a ghost was only his own shadow on the wall. Peter stole no more.

## The Little Rose-Bush.



MELIA had planted in a flower-pot a little rose-tree, which was covered, even in spring, with purple-tinted buds. In fine weather she placed the flower-pot outside the window; and every evening she took it into the house when the cool night-air began to come on. One evening she thought she would leave it out all night, as the air was so mild and calm; but next morning all the young buds were blighted by the frost. When Amelia saw this, she wept for her pretty rose-buds, and said with a sigh, "All my care has thus been thrown away by one act of imprudence!" Her mother took this opportunity of saying to her, "This little accident, which gives you so much trouble, should be a lesson to you of the most valuable kind. Learn from this that vice is to innocence what the frosty air is to the young rose-buds; and that to keep the heart free from the attacks of corruption requires the most constant care and watchfulness."

The rose—fair image of a spotless mind—  
Fades at the breath of the keen frosty wind.



### The Hermit.

MENTION is made in olden times of a man who was of a very passionate disposition ; but instead of looking for the cause in himself, he threw the blame upon the world, which provoked him to anger : so he thought it would be better altogether to leave his fellow-men, and thus to cure his bad temper. He went into the desert, and built himself a hut close by a stream ; and his bread was daily brought to him by a boy, who had orders to leave it on a ledge of rock at some distance from the hermit's

abode. For some days every thing went on very well, and he thought himself the most contented and humble of men; but one day, as he went with his pitcher to the brook, the ground being uneven and stony, he stumbled as he stooped down to lift the water, and the pitcher fell out of his hand. Again he stooped down more carefully; but the force of the running water, dashing along, knocked the pitcher out of his hand a second time. At this he was so enraged that he seized it, and, dashing it on the ground, broke it in a thousand pieces. Seeing thus that his old temper was still alive, and that the fault was not so much in the world as in himself, he began to think it would be better to return to the world, and, by struggling against temptation, seek to cure his evil temper. And so he left his hermit's hut, and his bread and water, and mixed again among his fellow-men, striving, by prayer and charity, to lead a good life, and to overcome his passions.



## The Fair.

IN the country there lived a rich lady, who had no children, and wished to adopt as her own some young girl from the neighbouring town, of an industrious and modest disposition. For this purpose she went to the next fair, and was not long in having many applications, as soon as it was known what she wanted. The lady was very well pleased so far, and gave some money to each girl, telling them to buy what they liked best, and to come again and let her see what they had purchased. So the girls went away, and soon came back quite delighted, bringing ribands of different colours, beautiful necklaces, and fine bonnets. Only one of the girls, named Rachel, had laid out her money better; and she had bought a good spinning-wheel. The lady took Rachel kindly by the hand, and said, " My dear girl, I see that you have more sense and prudence than any of the others. From the character of the articles which they have bought, they evidently think more about dress and folly than about work and saving. You are now my daughter, and shall go home with me to-morrow to my house in the country."

## The Precious Plant.

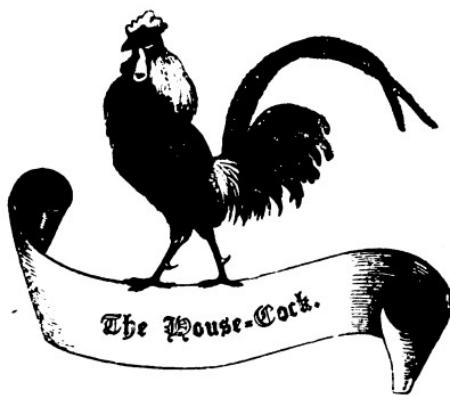
ETTY and Mary, two maid-servants, were going to a town not far off, each with a well-filled basket of fruit on her arm. Betty did nothing but groan and complain beneath her burden, while Mary was as merry as a lark. "How can you laugh so!" said Betty: "your basket is at least as heavy as mine, and you are not stronger than I am; how, then, can you trot along so gaily?" "Oh," replied Mary, "I put a certain plant into my basket, which makes it seem quite light; and if you had done the same, yours would have been as light too." "Well," replied Betty, "that must be a very useful plant, and I should like, above all things, that I had it just now; do tell me the name of it." "Its name is *patience*," replied Mary; "and nothing but it can lighten our burdens."

The patient boy or girl is happy still,  
Because they bear their load at Heaven's high will;  
This makes them know that Heaven intends their good,  
And gives them physic too, as well as food.

## The Monkey.

 MONKEY got into the room of a rich miser, who never gave a farthing to the poor; and seeing a chest full of gold, he began flinging the sovereigns out at the window among the people, till there was not one left. The monkey had just finished his job when the old miser came home; and seeing what had been done, his rage was very great, and he would have killed the monkey on the spot, if he had not jumped away faster than he came in. A neighbour, hearing what had been done, said to the miser, "It was very foolish of the monkey, certainly, to throw the sovereigns out at the window; but it is still more foolish for you to keep them locked up in a chest, without making any good use of them."

Happy the man who spends his money so,  
That, while it helps himself, it heals the poor man's  
woe.



TO save ourselves a little trouble,  
Our plans and schemes oft make it double.  
This once experienced, to her sorrow,  
A lazy maid, who every morrow  
Was woke too early, as she thought,  
By the cock's loud and echoing throat;  
Louder than bells, and far too clear,  
At such an hour, to be so near.  
What plan, then, think you, did she take  
To lie in bed when she should wake?  
Why, kill'd the cock—his neck, so shining,  
In wanton malice rudely twining.  
But far too cunning was the dame  
To be deceived by such a game :

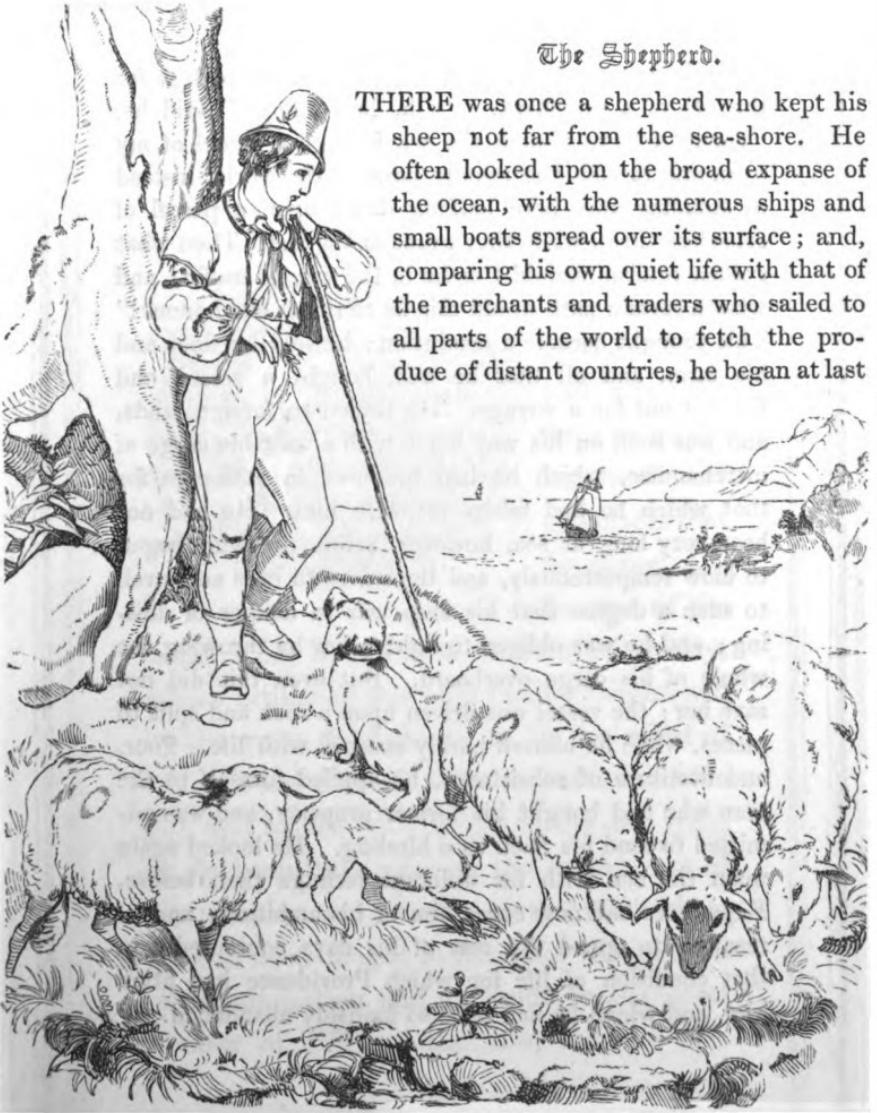
At a still earlier hour awaking,  
She gave the maid so good a shaking,  
As made her rue poor chanticleer,  
While to herself she sigh'd — " Oh, dear,  
To save myself a little trouble,  
I've plann'd, and schemed, and made it double!"



## The Little Fish-Stealer.

**D**ENNIS was a very thoughtless and wild boy, and set off one day to rob a fish-pond not far from the village where he lived. When he got to the pond, he plunged in his arm, and felt about for the fish for a long time without catching any. At last he laid hold of what he thought was a very fine and large one; and, pulling it out, what was his surprise and fright to behold a fierce-looking serpent! which he instantly threw from him back into the water, and ran off. James, the old fisherman, was just behind him, and gave him another fright. "Dennis," said James, "I will let you off for this time, in the hope that what you have now seen may do you good for the future. Remember my words—the words of an old man:—whenever you are tempted to take any thing that is not your own, look on it with the same horror as you did just now on that poisonous serpent. A stolen article turns to a viper in the hands of the thief."

The goods we gain unjustly turn to loss :  
What's fairly got is gold ; all else is worse than dross.



### The Shepherd.

THERE was once a shepherd who kept his sheep not far from the sea-shore. He often looked upon the broad expanse of the ocean, with the numerous ships and small boats spread over its surface ; and, comparing his own quiet life with that of the merchants and traders who sailed to all parts of the world to fetch the produce of distant countries, he began at last

to be discontented with his lot, and secretly to sigh for the life of a merchant. "Oh, how happy," said he, "should I be to plough the sea in a good vessel of my own, and to visit the remote parts of the world, instead of standing idly here looking down upon a parcel of senseless sheep while they graze at my feet. Then what golden returns should I make in the way of traffic; and what a certain path would this be to riches and honour!" This thought became a resolution: he sold his flock and his farm, and all that he had, bought a vessel, and fitted it out for a voyage. He traded to foreign lands, and was soon on his way home with a valuable cargo of merchandise, which he had procured in exchange for that which he had taken out with him. He had not been very long at sea, however, before the wind began to blow tempestuously, and the waves to rage and swell to such a degree that his ship was in danger of sinking; and he was obliged to lighten her by throwing the whole of his cargo overboard. But even this did not save her: the vessel was driven upon a rock and split to pieces, while he himself hardly escaped with life. Poor, and destitute of subsistence, he applied himself to the man who had bought his former property, and was admitted to tend his flock as a hireling. He looked again upon the sea with far different feelings than before. Experience had now cured him of his ambition; and he resolved to spend the rest of his days contentedly in that condition of life for which Providence had fitted him, and which he had once so foolishly abandoned.

## The Lily.



LOUISA had a beautiful garden, and in the calm summer evenings, she took much delight in watering the flowers and plants that flourished in it.

In one of its walks a lily bloomed in snow-white purity, whose brilliancy was still further heightened by the green turf around it, in the midst of which it was planted. Louisa was an amiable girl, and looked with delight at the dew lying on its beautiful leaves in the bright rays of the morning sun; while, at the same time, she had been taught to raise her thoughts in pious admiration and gratitude to the great Creator of the sun, the dew, and the lily.

Her parents shared in her pure and devout joy, and said to themselves, "She is herself like a lily in purity and grace." But before the end of the year she died; and when the lily bloomed again, her mother thought of her daughter with grief, and shed bitter tears. The father then said, "When this beautiful lily was quite young, and grew in a corner of the garden, I took it up; and Louisa was sorry, and said I should hurt it. But when she saw me plant it in a more favourable spot, where it became the ornament of the garden, she was very glad, and thanked me for having removed it. And just so, my dear, let us not weep and lament that Louisa has left us for a better world; for as she was like the lily in innocence and beauty while she lived, so now she blooms far from this bleak and stormy earth in the ever-calm and happy skies of paradise."

Beyond the tomb, beneath a fairer sky,  
They bloom in fadeless grace in CHRIST who die.



**S**IMON was a worthless fellow, and in fact a thief. He did not steal openly, indeed; but if any thing came in his way, he kept it, although he knew very well to whom it belonged. One morning he was passing by a smith's forge, and saw, not far from the door, a large iron chain lying on the ground. Looking carefully around him to see if any one was near, and seeing no one, he took hold of the chain, but let it fall to the ground again as quickly, uttering at the same time a loud cry. The chain was almost red-hot, and had burnt his hand severely. The smith, who had placed the chain on the ground to cool, came out, hearing the cries of the young man, and said to him, "Your hand, which you employed in taking what was not your own, well deserves its punishment; and, for your future benefit, I would advise you to hang up the chain, and never to forget the following maxim :

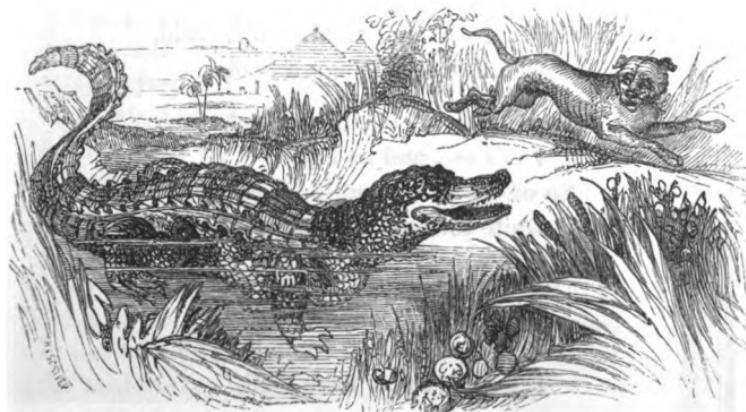
From others' goods and from hot iron keep :  
Right good advice, if you in peace would sleep.

## The Big Turnip.

**A**POOR but honest and hardworking man had in his garden a turnip which was so big as to astonish every body. So he thought within himself that he would make a present of it to his landlord, who he knew liked to see his tenants careful and industrious. His landlord praised him very much for such attention to his garden, and made him a handsome present for his pains. A neighbour, who was very rich and covetous, hearing of the poor man's good fortune, thought that he too would make a present to his landlord of a fine fat sheep which he had, thinking that if the other got such a handsome present for a miserable turnip, he should surely get much more for his fine sheep. When his landlord saw him come with his present, he knew very well that such generosity was only a mere pretence, in order to get a good price for his sheep, and therefore refused at first to accept it. But as the man still begged that he would be pleased to take it, his landlord consented, saying, "Well, if you force me to do so, I suppose I must take it; but as you are so very generous, allow me to make you a present in return of this very fine turnip, which, I assure you, cost me three times the value of your sheep." The man, thunderstruck at this unexpected present, sneaked off with the turnip, not very well pleased at the success of his scheme.

### The Dog and the Crocodile.

**A**S a dog was coursing the banks of the Nile, he grew thirsty; but, fearing to be seized by the monsters of that river, he would not stop to quench his thirst, but lapped as he ran. A crocodile, raising his head above the surface of the water, asked him why he was in such a hurry. "I have often," he said, "wished for your acquaintance, and should be glad to embrace the present opportunity to make it."—"You do me great honour," returned the dog; "but it is to avoid such companions as you that I make so much haste."



## The Fish and the Fly.

**D**EAR mother, said a little fish,  
“ Pray is not that a fly ?  
I’m very hungry, and I wish  
You’d let me go and try.”

“ Sweet innocent,” the mother cried,  
And started from her nook,  
“ That horrid fly is put to hide  
The sharpness of the hook.”

Now, as I’ve heard, this little trout  
Was young and foolish too ;  
And so he thought he’d venture out,  
To see if it were true.

And round about the hook he play’d,  
With many a longing look ;  
And “ Dear me,” to himself he said,  
“ I’m sure that’s not a hook.

I can but give one little pluck :  
Let’s see, and so I will.”  
So on he went ; and lo ! it stuck  
Quite through his little gill.

And as he faint and fainter grew,  
With hollow voice he cried,  
“ Dear mother, had I minded you,  
I need not now have died.”

## The Two Sparrows.



N a certain year, when there had been but little rain, and every thing was parched and dried up, two sparrows were almost starved to death. "My dear brother," said the weakest of the two to the other, "gather up all your strength, fly about, and try to find some food. I would gladly go with you, but I cannot move. If you get some food, bring me a little; but make haste, or I shall die with hunger." His companion promised to do as he wished, and flew away. He was so happy as to find a cherry-tree full of ripe fruit. "Oh," cried he, "my friend and I are saved!" He perched on the tree, begun to peck at the cherries, which he found very nice, and soon satisfied his hunger. An hour passed away; the sun was setting: the sparrow began to think that it was time to carry a few cherries to his fainting friend. "But no," said he, "I am yet too faint myself. I will just eat this cherry,—and then this, and this." Thus he went on, hopping from bough to bough, till night came, and he fell asleep. He did not awake till morning, and then hurried back to his brother; but he found him lying on his back and quite dead.

Remember that promises are sacred; and particularly so when given to a person in distress. In our own good fortune we are too apt to forget the misfortunes of others.

### The Nail.



COUNTRYMAN one day got out his horse to take a journey to a town not far off. Before riding away, he saw that one of the horse's shoes wanted a nail; but he thought a nail more or less was of no consequence: so he rode on without stopping to put in another. On the journey the shoe came off; and the man thought that if there were a smithy near, he would go in and get it fastened on; but not seeing one, he rode on, saying to himself, that the horse would get on very well with the three shoes that he had. By and by the horse hurt his foot, and began to limp; and, coming near a wood, two robbers rushed out of it; and as the horse could not gallop off, they took him with them, with his nice saddle and bridle, leaving his master to find his way as he could. As he walked along without his horse, he could not help saying to himself, not in the best humour, you may be sure: "Well, who would have thought that, for want of a nail, I should lose my horse?" The words of the old proverb apply to the affairs of the world to come, as well as to those of the present life:—

Never delay or slight the smallest thing;  
From this weak cause misfortunes often spring.



THE

Strayed Traveller.

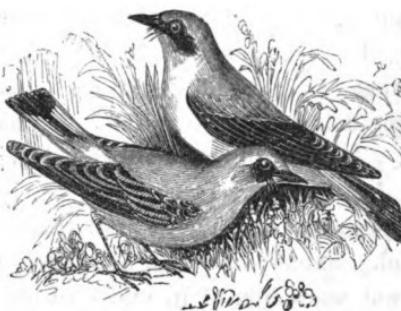
A TRAVELLER hastened back from foreign lands to his native home; and his heart was full of hope and longing, for he had not seen his beloved parents and his dear brothers and sisters for many years. Therefore he made all haste, and the more so the nearer he approached to his journey's end. But while travelling on the mount-

tains, the night overtook him ; and it was so dark that he could not see even the staff in his hand. And when he came down from the mountain into the valley, he strayed from the path, and wandered right and left, he knew not where. At last he became much alarmed, and said, sighing : " Ah, would that I could meet with a man who might conduct me into the right way ! how gratefully should I thank him !" While the strayed traveller stood there full of doubt and fear, behold there glimmered in the distance a flickering light ; and its little gleam appeared beautiful to him in the dark night. " Blessings upon thee, thou messenger of hope !" said he ; " thou makest known to me the nearness of my fellow-men. Thy feeble light is more delightful in my eyes than the morning dawn itself." The pilgrim hastened on with vigorous steps towards the place from which the light shone ; and he expected every moment to see the man who carried it. In his pursuit of the light, he had wandered to the very edge of a precipice. At this moment he heard a voice crying out to him, " Stop, or thou art a dead man." He stood and looked around, and at last discovered that it was the voice of a fisherman, who called to him, far below, out of his boat. " Wherefore," replied he, " should I not follow the friendly light ? I am a poor wanderer." " Friendly light !" exclaimed the fisherman ; " do

you thus call the deluding glimmer which arises from the stagnant marsh, and lures the traveller to destruction? Look how unsteadily it flickers —that evil produce of night and darkness!" As he thus spoke, the delusive light expired. It was an *ignis fatuus*. The weary pilgrim thanked the fisherman with hearty gratitude for his timely succour. The fisherman answered, "No thanks to me, my friend. Should one man see another in danger, and not warn him of it, and lead him back to the right way? We have both God to thank: I that He chose to make me the means of doing you a service, and you that it was so ordered that I should be at this hour on the water in my boat." Thereupon the good-natured fisherman left his boat, conducted the bewildered traveller into the right path, and shewed him the way to his home. The latter now walked on with confident steps; and soon, among the distant trees, he beheld the house-lamp, with its quiet modest shining, doubly dear to him because of the dangers through which he had reached it. He knocked, and the little door was opened; and father and mother, and brothers and sisters, hung upon his neck, and kissed him, and wept for joy.



## The Birds.



THERE was once a pretty village which was quite surrounded with various fruit-trees. In the spring - time all the trees were covered

with blossoms, which gave out the most delicious perfume; and their branches, as well as the neighbouring hedges, were thronged with singing-birds who made their nests there, and filled the air with their songs. In the autumn the trees were quite loaded with apples, pears, and other fruits. Now some bad boys began to rob the birds of their nests; and so the poor birds by degrees left a place where they were so ill treated, and they were no longer heard singing so beautifully, and the place became quite sad and gloomy. Hurtful insects, too, which the birds used to devour, became very numerous, and ate up the leaves and the blossoms of the trees, that looked quite bare and naked, as if it were winter. And now the wicked children, that used to get such plenty of fine fruit, could have no more; for the trees were quite stripped of their former abundance.

Ordain'd by Heaven the laws of nature stand;  
Do not disturb them, then, with impious hand.



### The Hunter and his Bow.

**A** SPORTSMAN had once an excellent bow of ebony, with which he could shoot very far and with a sure aim, and which, therefore, he greatly esteemed. But one day, when he happened to look at it attentively, he said, " My good bow, you certainly shoot very well, and you look, too, very nice and smooth ; I think, however, a little ornament would greatly improve you. I will see if I cannot remedy

this defect." To this end he consulted the best worker in ebony he could hear of, and agreed with him that he should carve a picture of a complete chase upon his bow; and what could be more appropriate for a huntsman's bow than such a picture? The man was delighted. "Thou hast well deserved this ornament, my dear bow," said he; "now let me try you." He stretched —and the bow broke!

The useful must not be sacrificed to the ornamental. Had the huntsman not weakened his bow by cutting away so much of the ebony for the sake of the picture, his loss would have been avoided.



### A Bird in a Cage.



H ! who would keep a little bird confined

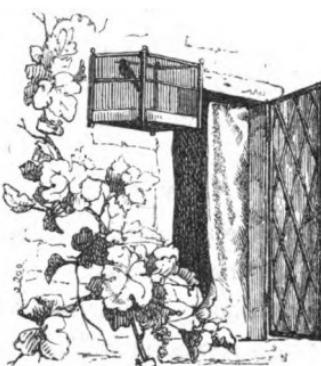
When cowslip-bells are nodding in the wind,

When every hedge as with " Good Morrow" rings,  
And, heard from wood to grove, the blackbird  
sings ?

Oh ! who would keep a little bird confined

In his cold wiry prison ? Let him fly,

And hear him sing, " How sweet is liberty !"



## The houseless Robin in January.

### I.



WHEN silent snows around are spread,  
Of every bird that flies,  
Robin is last to go to bed,  
If not the first to rise.\*

### II.

In the cold dawn it sits forlorn,  
Then "Chit—chit—chit" we hear,  
To bring to its deserted thorn  
The few friends that are near.

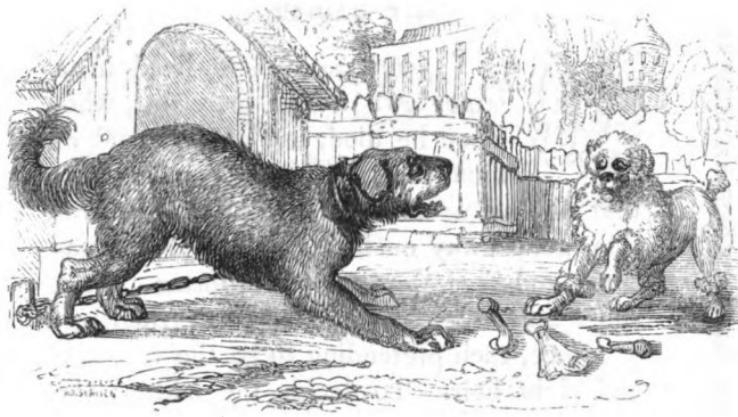
### III.

This is its morning hymn. It says,—  
"In this cold wintry weather,  
Poor friends, who wait for better days,  
Sing one sad hymn together."

### IV.

Happy when age and death appear,  
If some few friends remain,  
Life's last cold hours with hymns to cheer,  
Till spring's eternal reign."

\* The Lark only is up in the skies earlier.



### The House-Dog and the Poodle.

*House-dog.* Bold puppy, dare you touch my bones ?  
Do you not know me ?—my renown  
Frightens the dogs of half the town,  
And sends them off with yelps and groans ;  
The terror of the wolf am I,  
And robbers dread my warning cry.  
Again I say, rash cur, beware,  
And touch my dinner if you dare !

*Poodle.* Come on, and try what you can do ;  
I will not stir an inch for you.

*House-dog.* Oh, if it were not for this chain !

*Poodle.* Ay, there's the rub—that ugly chain !

## The Portrait.

ANY years ago there lived in a large town a rich merchant, who, when he died, left a great deal of money behind him. People knew that he had a son somewhere; but he was then gone away on his travels, and his features and face were quite forgotten. In a short time three young men made their appearance, each pretending to be the true son and right heir. To decide the matter, the judge ordered a portrait of the deceased merchant to be brought, and said, "Whichever of you can hit with an arrow the mark which I have made on the breast of the portrait will be entitled to the estate." So first one shot at it, and then another, without hitting the mark; till it came to the turn of the third, who, when about to shoot, was observed to turn pale and to shed tears, throwing down the arrows, and saying, "No, I will never aim a blow, not even in appearance, at the breast of my father; I had rather lose the whole estate." "Noble young man!" exclaimed the judge, "you are the true son and right heir, the others are only impostors; for no son would try to pierce the heart of his father, though it were only in a picture!"

## The Wolf turned Shepherd.

**A** WOLF, who, by his frequent visits to a flock of sheep, began to be too well known, determined that, in order to carry on his depredations more successfully, he would appear in a new character. To this end he disguised himself in a shepherd's dress; and, resting his fore-feet upon a stick, which served him by way of crook, he made his approach as quietly as possible towards the fold. The shepherd and his dog lay on the grass fast asleep; so that he would certainly have succeeded in his project, if he had not imprudently attempted to imitate the shepherd's voice. The horrible noise which he made awakened them both; when the wolf, encumbered with his disguise, and finding it impossible either to resist or escape, yielded himself up an easy prey to the shepherd's dog.

Designing hypocrites frequently lay themselves open to discovery by over-acting their parts.

## The Cherries.

**S**ABINA had a very nice apartment entirely to herself; but the directions and advice of her mother to keep it in order were neglected, so that every thing was thrown about any how, and it was always in a litter. One afternoon Sabina had just finished dressing herself, and was going out, when a neighbour's daughter brought her a basket of fine cherries. As the table and window-seat were occupied with various articles of dress, there was no room for the basket any where but on a chair, the cushion of which was covered with blue silk. Sabina then went out with her mother to take a walk in the village. In the evening she came home fatigued with her walk, and seated herself, in the dusk, on the chair with the cherries, but soon got up again, screaming so loud as to bring her mother with a light to see what was the matter. A pretty sight was then seen. Sabina's new white dress, as well as the cover of the chair, was all stained with the juice of the cherries, which was running down on the carpet. Her mother reprimanded her sharply for such carelessness, saying, " You now see how necessary it is to have a place for every thing and every thing in its place, and are properly punished by the loss of your gown for the neglect of such a necessary rule."

By care and order we gain many friends ;  
But heedlessness in ruin ever ends.

## The Moon.



R. RICHARDS had one day set out in the morning with his little boy Frederick for the city, from which Mrs. Richards and her daughter Anne returned home in the evening. Next day, when Mrs. R. said she had begun to be rather uneasy on the journey, Frederick replied that there was no danger; for the moon was shining beautifully, and had gone with them all the way. Anne also said that it had followed them constantly from the city home. "How could that be?" replied Frederick. "How could the moon go with us to the city, and at the same time back again with you? How could she at once go backward and forward?—that is impossible." His father said, "My dear Frederick, you are mistaken. Were I to attempt to explain it to you, you could not understand me, because you are not old enough and wise enough yet; and you must be content to be ignorant for some time longer. Let the moon's path in the sky be a lesson to you: as there are many things *beneath* the moon that you cannot understand, so you must not be surprised if there are some things *beyond* and *above* her that are as hard and difficult. Thus it is that in religion there are many things we are unable to explain; and the reason is, the weakness and limited nature of our faculties."

Oh, he is truly wise who yields his faith  
To all that God in His blest volume saith.

## The Rainbow.

**I**MEDIATELY after a storm, which had just purified the air and fertilised the fields, there appeared a beautiful rainbow in the sky.

Little Henry, who was looking out at the window, saw the rainbow, and cried out, quite delighted, "Oh, I never saw such beautiful colours! Look, how they fall down from the clouds on the earth near the old willow! I am sure there must be great quantities of them on the tree, in the shape of little drops. Let us run quickly to gather them, and I will put them into my colour-box." Henry then began running towards the tree as fast as he could. But when he got there, to his great surprise he saw nothing but drops of rain on the willow, and not the least appearance of any colours. So he came back quite vexed and sorrowful, and told his bad luck to his father, who said to him, smiling, "My dear boy, it is quite impossible to gather up these beautiful colours for such a purpose as you wished. They are only drops of rain, which shine for a few minutes by the sun's rays falling on

them, but that is all; for the colours which you see only last so long as the rain falls and the sun continues to shine on it. And so it is, my dear boy, with all the pomps and vanities of this world:—they seem to us to be beautiful and real, but, after all, they are only empty shadows."

Be not deceived by vanity and show,  
Else all thy joy will quickly turn to woe.





### The Man-eater.

**G**OING through a very dark wood, two little boys of the town once lost themselves, and were obliged to put up all night at a very shabby alehouse, which they saw there. During the night they heard some one talking loud in the next room; and wishing to hear what was said, they listened very close at the partition, and heard a man say, "Get ready the great kitchen-pot to-morrow; for I intend to kill the two little rogues that came from the town yesterday, and will have them boiled." The poor children, hearing this, were dreadfully frightened; for they thought the man was speaking of them,

and used to kill and eat people. They resolved, therefore, to make their escape by jumping out at the window; but in coming to the ground they hurt their feet, so that they could hardly walk. They found also the courtyard-gate locked and bolted, so that they could not get out, and were glad to creep into a little house among the pigs, where they passed the night in a state of the greatest fright. Next morning the landlord opened the door with a knife in his hand, which he was sharpening, calling out, at the same time, "Come along, you little rogues; this is the last hour you have to live." The children, hearing this, cried out most piteously, falling on their knees and begging to have their lives spared. The landlord was astonished to find the children in such a place, and asked why they took him for such a monster; and then they told him how they had listened, and what they had heard. "Foolish children!" said the man, "I was not speaking about you, but about *two pigs*, which I bought in the town yesterday, and which I am going to kill. Learn in future not to listen at keyholes and partitions, and never forget the lines which say—

The prying keyhole-listener's sure to hear  
Something to fill him or with shame or fear."

### The Dying Man's Smile.

**W**HEN a good old man was at the point of death, he called his children and grandchildren around him. He looked as if asleep, so calm and tranquil was his countenance, and was observed to smile three times, his eyes being closed all the time. When he opened them, one of his sons asked what it was that had made him smile so pleasantly. The old man answered, "The first time I was thinking over in my mind all the earthly pleasures which I have experienced during the course of my life; and I could not help smiling at the blind infatuation of a man who looks upon such airy bubbles as realities. The second time I reflected on all the sorrows that had fallen to my lot; and I rejoiced to think that they were now about to pass away for ever, and to be succeeded by their blessed fruits. The third time I reflected on death, and smiled to think on the terror this angel of God brings to men, although sent to finish all their sufferings, and to conduct them to the mansions of everlasting bliss."

### The Plums.

SRS. HALDEN, with her four children, paid a visit one day to their grandpapa, whom they found in his beautiful garden. The old gentleman was not long in bringing them four fine plums, which he presented on a leaf, smiling, and saying at the same time, "Now let me see how cleverly you can manage to divide these four plums among five persons, so that the division may be equal." "Oh," said Charlotte, the youngest girl, "I will see to that; only you must let me divide them as I please." She then took the four plums, saying, "My sister and I and one plum make three; my two brothers and one plum make also three; and mamma and two plums make three: so that here are four plums divided among five persons, and all making up equal numbers, according to grandpapa's rule." This mode of division caused general satisfaction, only mamma gave up her two plums to let each of the children have one; and grandpapa was so pleased with Charlotte's clever arrangement, that he pulled a charming nosegay for her, observing at the same time that "Charlotte's ingenious calculation did much credit to her head, but still more to her heart."



### The Cuckoo.

THE bee is humming in the sun,  
The yellow cowslip springs ;  
And, hark ! from yonder woodland's side  
Again the Cuckoo sings.

“ Cuckoo, cuckoo ! ” no other note  
She sings from day to day ;  
Yet I, though but a little girl,  
Can work, and read, and pray.

And whilst in knowledge I rejoice,  
Which heavenly truth displays,  
Oh ! let me still employ my voice  
In my Redeemer's praise.

## The Sun.

ONE evening Mrs. May, with her two children, came from the fields, where they had been assisting the reapers in their harvest-work. On entering the house they saw a lamp burning in one of the rooms, which surprised little George, who said, "Who can have lit the lamp, as there is no one in the house?" "It must have been papa," replied Margaret; "no doubt he came home before us, and placed it there." The children now ran into another room; and there they found their father, to their great delight. Next day both parents and children were again in the fields. The sun was shining very brightly, and the children were quite happy, and enjoyed the fine weather which he made. The father now said to them, "Yesterday, my children, you were at no loss to believe that it must have been your father who lit the lamp which you saw. Now, when you see the sun in the sky, which is so beautiful and useful a light, are you not curious to know who placed it there?" "Oh yes," replied Margaret: "I know who did it—it was God, who is so good and kind to us. He put it there; for it could not light itself, any more than the smallest lamp. There must be some one who made the sun, and put light in it; our own heads would tell us that, even if we had not been told it by others, in the lines which say:—

The sun in glory dress'd proclaims and tells to all,  
How great and good is God, who made that fiery ball."

## The Wonderful Casket.



HERE was once a lady whose housekeeping affairs went quite wrong with her, so that she every day missed something, and every year became poorer and poorer. In this bad state of things she went to take the advice of a very wise old hermit, who lived in a wood, that he might tell her what she was to do to make her affairs all right again. Now the hermit was a very good-humoured, happy old man; and he begged the lady to sit down in his humble cell for a few minutes, while he went for a little casket, carefully sealed up. "Now," he said to the lady, when he returned with the casket, "you must take this with you, and go with it three times every day and night into your kitchen, your wine and beer cellars and stables, and also into every room and corner of your house; and I will promise you that, if you do this, your affairs will get quite right and straight again. At the end of the year, when you have done all this, do not forget to return my wonderful casket to me." The lady, of course, punctually did all that the hermit had told her, as she had great faith in the casket and its wonder-working

powers. Next morning she began her visits at home; and on going into her cellar, the first thing she saw was one of her servants taking a flagon of beer. At night, when she went down into the kitchen, all the servants were there feasting and drinking, in place of being in their beds; and so in the stables and cowhouses the horses and cows and every thing were neglected. In this way she found something every day to set right. When the year was ended, she went to the hermit with his casket, and begged the loan of it for another year, as it contained such an excellent remedy that she wished to use it a little longer. The hermit smiled, and said he could not let her have it any longer, but he would give her the remedy which was enclosed in it; and, opening it, he took out a piece of paper with the following inscription:

Use your own eyes, if you would be  
From waste and want and sorrow free.





### The Pig-stealer.

EVERY late one night the keeper of a dancing-bear came to a village, and put up at a public-house. The landlord had just sold a pig, and so he let the bear have the pig's sty to sleep in. A thief, who had been watching an opportunity to steal the pig, not knowing that it had been sold, came that night, and went into the pig's sty to lay hold of her and carry her off; but was not a little surprised and terrified to find himself seized by a bear, which growled

frightfully, and held the thief quite firm in his paws, so that he could not get away. The noise made by the thief was so great as to awaken the people in the inn, who came running to see what was the matter; and it was with great difficulty they got the man away from the bear, which had wounded and torn him very severely. And this was not all; for he was taken to prison, and punished afterwards, as the law directs.

Even in the present world the sinner feels  
The hand of vengeance, when he robs or steals.



### Humility.

THE bird that soars on highest wing  
Builds on the ground her lowly nest;  
And she that doth most sweetly sing  
Sings in the shade when all things rest:  
In lark and nightingale we see  
What honour hath humility.

## The Apple.

 T was little Albert's fifth birthday ; and his godfather came to see him after dinner, and made him a present of a sovereign. While he was chatting with the parents, the child ran away with his sovereign, and got out at the street-door. Just at that moment a woman was passing with some apples ; and Albert said to her, "Look what a present I have got." "Ah," said the woman, "my apples are finer ; but if you will give me your present, I will give you one of my finest apples for it." The little fellow was well pleased with the offer, gave her his sovereign, and took hold of the apple with both his hands. He then ran back to the room, crying out, "See what a fine rosy-cheeked apple I have got for my money!" Albert's papa and mamma scolded him severely for having been so foolish, and sent a servant to look for the woman ; but she could not be found. The godfather was wise enough not to be angry with the little boy, who had not been taught to know better, and only remarked to the parents, "How often we see grown-up people act as foolishly as this little child ! How many there are who,

For life's uncertain, perishable joys,  
Forego immortal hopes, and act like foolish boys."

### The Purse.

LITTLE Neddy was the son of a poor man who gained his bread by selling coals. One day Neddy was sitting at the foot of a tree in the middle of a wood, crying bitterly, and praying to God for help, when a gentleman passed by, who was hunting, dressed in red. Hearing the child cry, he drew near, and asked what was the matter. Neddy told him how his mother had been long ill, and that he had been sent into the town to pay for some physic, but that he had lost the purse with the money which his father had given him. The gentleman then drew a purse of red silk out of his pocket, filled with sovereigns, and said, "Is that your purse?" "Oh, no," replied Neddy; "mine was not so fine, and had not so much money in it." "Well, then, this is it, I suppose," said the gentleman, who had found it, shewing Neddy a poor-looking purse. "Oh, yes," cried the little boy, quite delighted to see his purse again; "that is it, that is it!" "My good boy," said the gentleman, "here, take this purse also, as a reward for your trust in God and your honesty."

How soothing in our grief to pray to God!

How light his breast who feels not falsehood's load !

Well, there was another boy, who heard the story of the purse; and he went into the wood, and sat down beneath a tree, and began to cry and lament; when the same gentleman came past in hunting, and asking him what was the matter, the boy said he had lost his purse. The gentleman then took out a purse filled with sovereigns; and asking him if that was it, the boy cried, "Oh, yes, that is the purse which I lost," and held out his hand to take it. The gentleman now whispered something to his servant, who was near him; and the man, lifting up his whip, called out to the boy, "O you little rascal! how dare you tell the gentleman such a lie! I will pay you in another way;" and so saying, he gave him a sound whipping, as he well deserved.

To lie and cheat brings punishment along;  
Sooner or later shame still follows wrong.

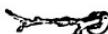




### The Snowman.

Look at him, O what a Guy !  
Who would not before him fly,  
Standing thus, with stick so stout,  
Threat'ning all his foes to rout,  
Did we not, from day to day,  
See him stand the self-same way ?

Well the boys his head may pelt,  
Since his stick they never felt.  
Snowman, what a cheat you are ;  
Fit for neither flight nor war !  
Pale your face as any sheet :  
Should it e'er the sunbeams meet,  
Down like water it will flow,  
And we'll lose thee, man of snow !



#### The Loaf of Bread.

**D**URING a season of scarcity a rich man invited to his house a number of the poorest children in the town, and told them that every morning he would give them a loaf of bread till such time as it should please Heaven to send a plentiful harvest. The children seized the loaves quite rudely, and quarrelled among themselves as to who should have the largest loaf; and at last they went away without so much as thanking the kind giver. One little girl alone, named Fanny, whose clothes were

very ragged and wretched, stopped at a short distance while the others were taking the bread, and at last took the smallest loaf that had been left, humbly kissing, at the same time, the hand of the rich man, and going quietly away. Next day the children did not behave any better; and Fanny got a loaf that was smaller than any of the others. When she took it home to her father and mother, as soon as her mother began to cut it up in slices, a quantity of money fell out, to their great surprise; but the mother told Fanny to take it back instantly to the kind gentleman, for it had no doubt got into the loaf by some mistake. Fanny did so; but the gentleman refused to take it, saying there was no mistake, for he had put the money himself into the smallest loaf, as a reward for Fanny's good behaviour. "Be always," he said, "as easily satisfied; for they who would rather be contented to take the smallest loaf than to fight and quarrel about it, will be sure to carry the blessing of God home with them."

Be satisfied with little, gain'd in peace,  
And God on you and yours will shed increase.

## The Gold Watch.



POOR little boy, named Ernest, once went into a mill to sleep; and, waking about midnight, he heard a slight noise near the wall where he lay. Looking up, he saw, by the light of the moon, that the sound came from a watch hanging on the wall. The thought now came into his mind to steal the watch and run away with it. His conscience told him that this would be wrong; but the desire to take it becoming stronger every instant, he thought the best way would be to leave the mill altogether, and so escape the temptation. When he had run a little way, he began to repent that he had not taken the watch, and was going to return, but his conscience again whispered to him how wrong it would be; and so he went on his journey. The moon having sunk beneath a cloud, it now became very dark, and Ernest lost himself for a while; but at length he got upon a mound, where he lay down and fell asleep. In the morning he awoke; and looking up, he saw that he was sleeping beneath a gallows, where a robber was hanging in chains.

A voice now seemed to say to him, "Look, this is what might have happened to you, if you had taken the watch, and so gone on from one bad thing to another." Full of gratitude to God, who had saved him from such a terrible end, he fell on his knees, and offered up his thanksgivings to Heaven.



### The Stolen Horse.

ONE night a farmer had a very fine horse stolen from him. He therefore went to a horse-market some miles off, in order to buy another. Among the horses which he saw there for sale, he was surprised to see his own. Laying hold of the bridle, he said that the horse was his, and had been stolen from him three days before. "You are quite mistaken, my dear sir," said the man who had brought the horse to the market; "I have had the horse for more than a year. He may have some likeness to yours; but that is all." The farmer then put his hands on the horse's eyes, and said, "Well, if the horse is really yours, you can no doubt tell me which of his eyes

is blind." The thief, who had not looked at the horse's eyes, was quite silent for a moment; but knowing that he must say something, soon replied, "On the left eye." "You are wrong there," replied the farmer; "he is not blind on the left eye." "O, I meant to say the right," replied the thief; "I made a mistake." The farmer then took away his hands from the horse's eyes, and said, "It is quite clear, now, that you are a rogue and a liar. Look here," said the farmer to the people standing by, "the horse is not blind at all. I only asked these questions to prove that the horse is mine, and that he had been stolen from me by this thief, who pretends to be his owner." All the people then began to shout and laugh at the clever way in which the thief had been discovered, who was then sent to prison and properly punished for his roguery.

A thief may have plenty of wit and skill,  
But an honest man is cleverer still.



## The Little Boy and his Sister.

JAMES and Anne were one day at home quite alone, when the former said, "Come, Anne, and let us get something nice, and have a feast."

"Very well," said Anne; "if you can take me into a place where no one can see us, I will go with you, and make one of the party."

"O," said James, "we will go into the little room where the milk is kept, and have some nice sweet cream." "No," replied his sister, "it's of no use going there; for there is a man cutting wood in the street close by, who will see us."

"Then," replied James, "we will go into the kitchen: there is some honey in a cupboard there, and we will spread it on slices of bread." Anne objected to this too, saying that the girl at the opposite window would certainly see them.

"Then," said James, "let us go into the cellar, and take some apples; it is so very dark there that nobody can possibly see us."

"My dear brother," replied Anne, "surely you cannot think that. Have you forgotten that Eye which sees us at all times, and in all places, in the darkest and most hidden as well as in the bright sunshine?" James blushed deeply at

hearing this ; and recollecting himself, said to his sister, " You are right : God is every where present, and we cannot conceal ourselves from His notice. I will no longer think of doing the wicked action which I just mentioned." Anne was delighted to hear her brother speak so like a good and penitent boy, and made him a present of a fine picture, where, among other things, there was the figure of a great eye, signifying God's omniscience, surrounded with rays of light, and at the bottom the following words :—

O let me ever see above  
Thy holy eye with fear and love,  
To keep me from the ways of sin,  
And so Thy great approval win.



#### The Diamonds.

**A**LADY of high rank once told a jeweller to make for her a brilliant necklace, and gave him some diamonds and other precious stones for the purpose. The jeweller's apprentice, Robert, was very much pleased to see such beautiful stones, and took great pleasure in

looking at them and admiring them. One day the jeweller suddenly missed two of the finest of them ; and his suspicions falling on the apprentice, he went to his room to look for them ; and, sure enough, he found them there, in a hole in the wall. It was to no purpose for Robert to declare that he had not taken them ; his master would not believe him, and gave him a severe beating, telling him, at the same time, that he richly deserved the gallows, and packed him out of the house. Next day another diamond was missing ; and the jeweller found it in the same hole where he had found the others. The jeweller then resolved to watch and see who the thief might be ; and after waiting some time, a magpie, which Robert had tamed, came on the counter, took up one of the diamonds in his beak, and went off with it to the hole. The jeweller was very sorry to find that he had accused and punished Robert unjustly ; and, sending for him, he took him back into his service, apologised to him, and made him a very handsome present, as some atonement for the injury he had done him.

Fear to admit suspicion in thy breast,—  
Too oft it smites the good,—a dark, unwelcome guest.

### The Apples.

**E**ARLY one morning little Alfred saw from his window in a neighbouring orchard a number of beautiful red apples, scattered about on the grass. Alfred lost no time in running down, and trying to get some; so, creeping through a hole in the hedge, he filled his pockets as full as they could cram, and was making off with his ill-gotten booty, when all of a sudden he saw the owner of the apples watching him, with a good thick stick in his hand. Our little thief took to his heels at seeing this, and was making the best of his way through the hole in the hedge by which he entered, but stuck fast, owing to his pockets being so stuffed out. Being now caught, he not only was obliged to give up all that he had stolen, but got a good sound drubbing to boot, and the following excellent piece of advice as to how he should behave in future :

Injustice, of whatever kind,  
Brings its own punishment behind.



### The Story of Androcles.

HERE was a certain slave, named Androcles, who was so ill-treated by his master that his life became insupportable. Finding no remedy from what he suffered, he at length said to himself, "It is better to die than to continue to live in such hardships and misery as I am obliged to suffer. I am determined, therefore, to run away from my master; if I am taken again, I know that I shall be punished with a

cruel death; but it is better to die at once than to live in misery. If I escape, I must betake myself to deserts and woods, inhabited only by wild beasts; but they cannot use me more cruelly than I have been by my fellow-creatures, therefore I will rather trust myself to them than continue to be a miserable slave." Having formed this resolution, he took an opportunity of leaving his master's house, and hid himself in a thick forest, which was some miles distant from the city. But here the unhappy man found that he had only escaped from one kind of misery to experience another. He wandered about all day through a vast and trackless wood, where his flesh was continually torn by thorns and brambles. He grew hungry; but he could find no food in this dreary solitude. At length he was ready to die with fatigue, and lay down in despair in a large cavern. The unfortunate man had not been long quiet in the cavern before he heard a dreadful noise, which seemed to be the roar of some wild beast, and terrified him very much. He started up with a design to escape, and had already reached the mouth of the cave, when he saw coming towards him a lion

of prodigious size, which prevented any possibility of retreat. He now believed his destruction to be inevitable; but, to his great astonishment, the beast advanced towards him with a gentle pace, without any mark of enmity or rage, and uttered a kind of mournful noise, as if he demanded the assistance of the man. Androcles, who was naturally of a resolute disposition, acquired courage from this circumstance to examine his monstrous guest, who gave him sufficient leisure for this purpose. He saw, as the lion approached him, that he seemed to limp upon one of his legs, and that the foot was extremely swelled, as if it had been wounded. Acquiring still more fortitude from the gentle demeanour of the beast, he advanced towards him, and took hold of the wounded part as a surgeon would examine his patient. He then perceived that a thorn of uncommon size had penetrated the ball of the foot, and was the occasion of the swelling and the lameness which he had observed. Androcles found that the beast, far from resenting his familiarity, received it with the greatest gentleness, and seemed to invite him by his blandishments to proceed. He

therefore extracted the thorn, and, pressing the swelling, discharged a considerable quantity of matter, which had been the cause of so much pain. As soon as the beast felt himself thus relieved, he began to testify his joy and gratitude by every expression in his power. He jumped about like a wanton spaniel, wagged his enormous tail, and licked the feet and hands of his physician. Nor was he contented with these demonstrations of kindness. From this moment Androcles became his guest; nor did the lion ever sally forth in quest of his prey without bringing home the produce of the chase, and sharing it with his friend. In this savage state of hospitality did the man continue to live during several months. At length, wandering unguardedly through the woods, he met with a company of soldiers sent out to apprehend him, and was by them taken prisoner and conducted back to his master. The laws of the country being very severe against slaves, he was tried and found guilty of having fled from his master; and, as a punishment for the crime he had committed, he was sentenced to be torn in pieces by a furious lion, kept many days without food, to inspire

him with additional rage. When the destined moment arrived, the unhappy man was exposed unarmed in the middle of a spacious arena, enclosed on every side, round which many thousand people were assembled to view the mournful spectacle. Presently a dreadful yell was heard, which struck the spectators with horror; and a monstrous lion rushed out of a den, which was purposely set open, with erected mane and flaming eyes, and jaws that gaped like an open sepulchre. A mournful silence instantly prevailed. All eyes were turned upon the destined victim, whose destruction seemed inevitable. But the pity of the multitude was soon converted into astonishment when they beheld the lion, instead of destroying its defenceless enemy, crouch submissively at his feet, fawn upon him as a faithful dog would do upon his master, and rejoice over him as a mother that unexpectedly recovers her offspring. The governor of the town, who was present, then called out with a loud voice, and ordered Androcles to explain to them this unintelligible mystery, and how a savage of the fiercest and most unpitying nature should thus in a moment have forgotten his innate dispo-

tion, and be converted into a harmless and inoffensive animal. Androcles then related to the assembly every circumstance of his adventures, and concluded by saying, that the very lion which now stood before them had been his friend and entertainer in the woods. All present were astonished and delighted with the story, to find that even the fiercest beasts are capable of being softened by gratitude; and, being moved by humanity, they unanimously joined to entreat for the pardon of the unhappy man from the governor of the place. This was immediately granted to him; and he was also presented with the lion, which had twice saved the life of Androcles.



### Pussy.

*Girl.—Pussy, why for ever scrubbing,  
Ever washing, ever rubbing?  
Long ago the stains were gone,  
And thy coat like velvet shone.*

*Pussy.*—Why? it is because I love  
To be spotless as a dove;  
Head and feet must all be clean,  
Dirt on me was never seen.  
Yes! and every one loves pussy  
For her coat so bright and glossy;  
Every where she's free to go,  
Patted both by high and low.  
And the reason why, I guess,  
Is—Pussy's love of cleanliness.



### Fox and Goose.

*Fox.*—“ Come, Mrs. Goose, this lovely weather,  
And let us take a walk together ;  
I quite admire your snow-white coat,  
Bright eyes, and long and slender throat.”

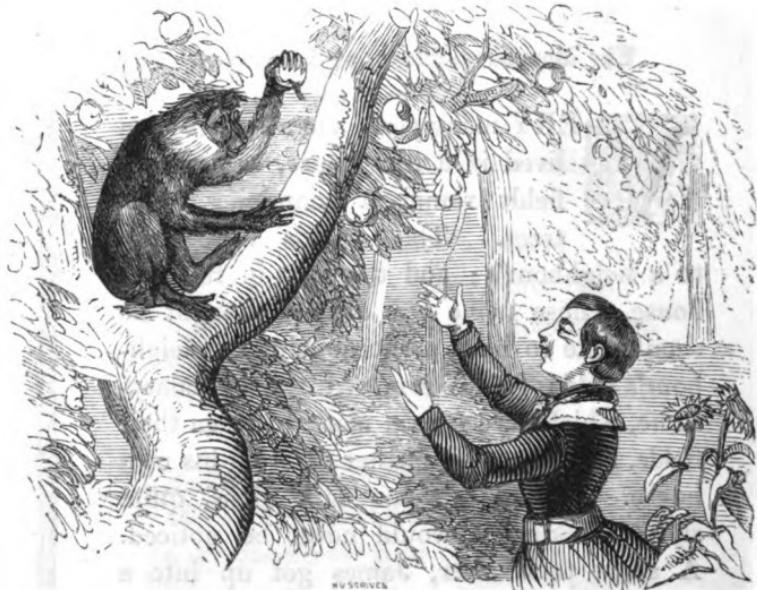
*Goose.*—“ Thank you, right kindly,  
Mister Fox ;  
But more I thank the bolts and locks  
That keep you outside of the door  
To try elsewhere your lying lore.  
The weather, ere you came, was fair ;  
But since you spoke, I do declare,  
The thought of such a walk together  
Has changed the scene to wintry weather.”

It was not that the air was cold,  
But that the Fox’s tricks of old  
Were all well known to Mistress Goose,  
And kept her from his cunning noose.  
For once if out of doors she’d gone,  
He would have left her not a bone.

## The Boundary-Stone, or Landmark.

**N**ERY many years ago a certain man lived in a nice house, with pretty fields round it containing fruit-trees. These fields were near to a neighbour's; and the man in the nice house, whose name was James, thought he should like to have a slice out of his neighbour's field; so he removed the boundary-stone, which served as a mark between their fields, and placed it farther off from his own house. He did this one dark night, quite slyly, thinking it would never be noticed. A short time after, James got up into a tree to pull some cherries that grew near the stone; and losing his hold, he fell down on the stone that was just below, and broke his neck. So that you see what he got by cheating his neighbour; for if the boundary-stone had been left to stand in its old place, no great harm would have happened to him by the fall; for he would have come down upon the soft grass.

Mark here how wicked men succeed,  
Punish'd by their own act and deed.



### Monkey and Boy.

*Boy.*—"There he is in the apple-tree!  
You ugly thing, is't you I see?  
What business have you there, I pray,  
Grinning and jumping from spray to spray?".

*Monkey.*—"Come, boy, your jibes and jeers give  
o'er,  
Or I'll give you a dozen knocks and more."

*Boy.*—"Ho! Mr. Monkey, you mean to strike?  
So fling away as long's you like."

Thus saying they carried the battle on—  
The boy with cutting jibe and fun ;  
The monkey provoked, in passion banging  
The apples down, so thickly hanging.  
A good round dozen the boy pick'd up,  
And then ran off on his prize to sup.

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### The Horse.

WO thieves having stolen a horse,  
took him with them into a wood,  
and sat down to arrange what they  
should sell him for, and what  
share each of them should have of the money.  
As they could not agree about this, they soon  
began to fight; and another thief, coming past  
whilst they were in the middle of the quarrel,  
mounted on the horse's back, and rode off  
with him without being seen. After the two  
thieves had beaten each other black and blue,  
they saw that the horse about which they had  
been fighting so long was gone; thus making  
good the proverb, that when thieves fall out,  
there is a chance of honest men getting their  
own; although in this case it was not the real  
owner, but another thief, who got the horse.

### The Bed of Pinks.

**M**OTHER, give each of us a flower-bed that we may call our own—me one, and William one, and Ellen one—and we will take care of them.—So said little Frederick to his mother; and the mother let him have his wish, and gave to each of her children a flower-bed full of beautiful pinks. The children were delighted with the gift, and said, “When the pinks begin to blow, it will be a lovely sight!” for it was then in the spring, and the buds had only just begun to shew themselves. Little Frederick was very impatient, and could not wait till the buds had opened; and he wished that his flower-bed should bloom before either of the others. He went into the garden and took a bud in his hand, looked at it, and was greatly pleased to find that a bright red leaf was already beginning to peep out of its green covering. In his eagerness, however, he broke open the bud and separated the leaves. “Now,” cried he with a loud voice, “see, my pink has blown!” But when the sun shone on it, the flower bowed its head, drooped, and withered away. And the boy cried to see it; but there was then no help for it. Thus an impatient temper brings its own punishment.

## The Moss-Rose.

FROM THE GERMAN OF KRUMMacher.

THE Angel of the flowers, one day,  
Beneath a rose-tree sleeping lay ;—  
That spirit to whose charge 'tis given  
To bathe young buds in dews of heaven.  
Awaking from his light repose,  
The Angel whisper'd to the rose —  
“ O fondest object of my care !  
Still fairest found where all are fair ;  
For the sweet shade thou giv'st to me,  
Ask what thou wilt, 'tis granted thee !”  
“ Then,” said the rose, with deepen'd glow,  
“ On me another grace bestow.”  
The spirit paused in silent thought,—  
What grace was there that flower had not ?  
‘Twas but a moment — o'er the rose  
A veil of moss the Angel throws ;  
And robed in nature's simplest weed,  
Could there a flower that rose exceed ?



## The Bag of Flax-seed.



HERE was once a rich lady who grew flax in one of her fields; and there came a man to her, who said he dealt in that article, and wished to sell her some that he said was good and came from a foreign country, while hers, he told her, was very bad. He then offered to make an exchange with her of an equal quantity of his for an equal quantity of hers, and a sovereign besides, as his was so much better; and the lady agreed to the bargain. Now the man was a great rogue, and thought to cheat the lady by bringing back her own seed, and pretending it was the good seed which he had spoken about; so that he might have the sovereign for nothing. "If the seed turns out bad," he thought, "all I have to say is, that it is owing to the weather, or the quality of the ground where it grew." So he brought the seed to the lady; and in emptying it, a fine gold ring fell out, which belonged to the lady, and which had slipped off her finger when she was measuring it out before she sent it away. So she said to him: "You are a rogue and a cheat, and this ring among the seed proves it. You

have brought back my own seed, pretending it to be the excellent foreign seed which you wished me to take. In place of giving you a sovereign, I shall make you pay me one, as a punishment for your roguery." So the judge condemned him to pay that sum to the lady; and the man's bad character became so well known, that he was obliged to leave the country altogether.

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### The Stag.

"**G**REAT and tall I tower on high,  
My powerful antlers pierce the sky;  
At hounds or horn I'll never fear,  
Or hide me like a stricken deer;  
Boldly I'll stand and face the crew,  
And teach them better manners too."  
—But hark! what sounds are heard afar,  
And make the poor stag's nerves to jar?  
Alas! his courage sinks and dies,  
Swiftly o'er hill and dale he flies,  
To hide him in the thickest shade,  
And muse on the mad resolve he made.





**A** POOR man had just one acre of ground, and that was very stony and barren. He cultivated it, nevertheless, with great care, clearing out the stones and weeds, and digging and preparing it for seed. One day, when he was throwing the seed into it, he was addressed by a learned man passing by, who asked him how he could spend so much labour and money on such a wretched piece of ground? The poor man replied, that he did so because he trusted that God would do His part to bless it and make it yield a crop, as he had done his to clear and prepare it.

## The Inheritance.



N the children of a rich merchant agreeing that they would keep and maintain him as long as he lived, he gave up to them all his property. At first they were very attentive to him; but by degrees they neglected him, and seemed to envy every mouthful of food he took, and scarcely gave him clothes to his back. The old gentleman now began to see his mistake in giving up every thing to his children. "It would have been better," he said, "for them to be begging from me, than I from them." Now, it happened that an old friend, who had owed the father some money for a long time, paid it to him, after he had given it up for lost. So the merchant got a large chest, and kept all this money locked up in it, only taking out from time to time what he wanted. His children now began to be very civil and attentive to him, in hopes that he would give them this money also. But he took good care not to give them a farthing; and so they were obliged to console themselves with the hope that he would leave it all to them at his death. When he died, they lost no time in opening the box; but found nothing in it except a quantity of bricks, and the following lines on a piece of paper:—

Ungrateful children feel the curse of Heaven;  
And to their prayers not gold, but stones, is given.



### The Sow.

“ CHILDREN,” thus spoke good mamma,

“ Listen to my word and law.

Manners proper and polite

You must make your sole delight;

Always neat and clean, and ever

Sweet as from a limpid river;

Not as some pigs love to do,

Wading puddles through and through.”

Thus she spoke, but soon she saw  
All her deeds observed as law ;  
As herself had always done—  
    As the children saw her do ;  
Taking great pains to learn, they soon  
    Just like her looked and acted too !  
They were nothing worse nor nothing better,  
But all were swine to the very letter !



### Horse and Sparrow.

*Sparrow*.—"Full is thy crib, thou noble  
    steed,  
Let me partake, in time of need,  
    A single corn or two ;  
Thou'l never miss a gift so small."

*Horse*.—"With all my heart. Come to my  
    stall,  
There's some for me and you."  
And when summer came on, with burning heat,  
And the gad-flies stung the steed's neck and  
    feet,  
To snatch them up quickly the sparrow was  
    near,  
And the good horse had nothing to suffer or  
    fear.

## The Little Basket-Maker.



HE parents of a little boy named Edward were very rich; and trusting to the money which he would get from them, he took no pains to learn, and would never work or look at a book. Little James, on the other hand, who lived near Edward, was a poor boy, but very diligent and industrious, and was very clever at making baskets. One day, while Edward was fishing by the sea-side, and James busy cutting down some branches of willow to make baskets, they were seized and dragged away by some pirates, who put them on board their ship, and intended to sell them as slaves. While they were sailing away, a great storm arose, and dashed the ship against a rock on an unknown island. All the crew were lost, except the two boys, who came safe to land, and found the inhabitants to be blackamoors. James now thought that he might please them by setting to work and making some pretty baskets; so, taking out his knife, he cut down some willow-branches which were growing there, and platted them into a beautiful basket. Many of the blacks, men, women,

and children, seeing James busy with his basket, drew near, and stood round him, looking on with great curiosity, as he worked away and sang so merrily. When the basket was finished, he made a present of it to the principal man, or chief, in the island ; and now every one was desirous of having a basket like the other ; and James was taken to a nice cottage, surrounded with fruit-trees, where he might live quietly and at his ease, with plenty to eat and drink, and make baskets all day long. Edward was also asked to make a basket ; but he was so stupid and ignorant, that they had no patience with him, and gave him a good beating, and would have killed him, if James had not begged and prayed them to spare his life. Having done this to please James, the blacks stripped Edward of his fine clothes, and gave them to James, and put James's coarse clothes on Edward, who was also made to wait on James as his servant, and to fetch him plenty of willow-wands for baskets. Thus you see that, in every country under the sun,—

The clever and industrious boy  
Is sure to meet with friends ;  
While he that won't his hands employ  
His life in misery spends.

## The Stag.

HERBERT was only a little boy when his father, who was park-keeper to a great lord, was shot by a poacher. His mother took the best care of him that she could; and, when he grew up to be a man, he got his father's place. Herbert was one day out hunting; and having fired at a large stag, missed him, and at the same moment heard piercing groans and cries from the thicket close by. He rode up to see what was the matter, and found that he had shot an old man, whom he had not seen, and who was lying on the ground in the agonies of death. Instantly all the party came round him; and Herbert was almost distracted, and assured him that he had no idea of any one being near, and begged he would forgive him. The dying man then said, " You have no need of my forgiveness: it was I that shot your father; and now I have met with my just punishment in being shot by his son. It was here, beneath this very oak, that he fell; and now you, without knowing or intending it, have killed his murderer. I have kept my crime secret until now; but God is just, be-

fore whom I must now appear, and his vengeance no sinner can escape." So saying, the old man expired; while all the beholders were struck with awe and astonishment.

Think not, although your crimes elude the light,  
That all is safe when man is not in sight;  
God watches all with ever-present care,  
And drags the sinner from his secret lair.



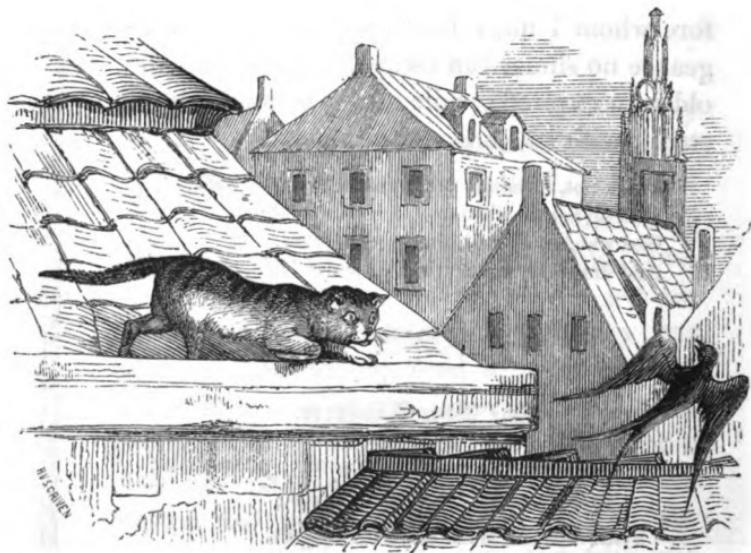
### The Poor Labourer.

" ARE you not tir'd with work, poor man ;  
The drops are on your brow ;  
Your labour with the sun began,  
And you are labouring now ?"

" I murmur not to dig the soil,  
For I have heard it read,  
That man by industry and toil  
Must eat his daily bread.

The lark awakes me with his song,  
That hails the morning grey ;  
And when I mourn for human wrong,  
I think of God, and pray.

Let others waste their time and health,  
And try each vain delight,  
They cannot buy, with all their wealth,  
The labourer's rest at night."



### The Cat.

Pussy, why so sly stealing  
To the roof, thy steps concealing?  
Ah! a swallow thou hast seen—  
Bird that loves the village-green,  
Or the pool, where insects thronging,  
Yield the food that suits its longing.  
Now, upon the house-top sitting,  
Tired of all its mazy flitting,  
Pussy sees it, and proposes  
A sweet meal ere evening closes.

But the swallow, too, is clever;  
And no arrow from the quiver  
Swifter flies, as pussy now  
Saw with disappointed brow.  
Oh, it is a shocking thing  
Birds should be so swift of wing!  
So thought pussy as she crept  
Back again; and would have wept,  
But a mouse she quickly saw,  
And that stopped her ravenous maw.



### The Cuckoo.

 EORGE and Michael, on a fine morning in May, were passing through a wood, and heard for the first time the song of the joyous cuckoo. "That bird forebodes good luck," said George, who was rather of a superstitious turn of mind; "I expect I shall have a pocketful of money at least!" "And why should the good luck be to you?" replied Michael, who was as weak-minded and silly as his companion; "I don't know why the cuckoo should

be so particularly fond of you. For my part, I rather think that her favours will fall to my share." So, in place of enjoying the beauty of the morning, and listening with delight to the simple and pleasing notes of the cuckoo, these foolish, bad-tempered boys began to quarrel and fight, until at last they parted, both well thrashed and bruised, and in the worst humour possible with each other.

Next day our two combatants met at the doctor's; and, while he bandaged their wounds and bruises, they told him how the quarrel had arisen, and asked him for which of them he thought the cuckoo intended her favours. "Why, neither, to be sure," replied the doctor,—“fools that you are,—but for me; for has she not sent you to me with broken heads, and a long bill to pay, and thus put money in *my* purse?"

Quarrels like these excite our ridicule,  
And end in loss to each poor silly fool.



## The Discontented Squirrel.

**N**a pleasant wood, on the western side of a ridge of mountains, there lived a Squirrel, who had passed two or three years of his life very happily. At length he began to grow discontented, and one day fell into the following train of thought :—

“ What, must I spend all my time in this spot, running up and down the same trees, gathering nuts and acorns, and dozing away months together in a hole ! I see a great many of the birds who inhabit this wood ramble about to a distance wherever their fancy leads them ; and, at the approach of winter, set out for some remote country, where they enjoy summer weather all the year round. My neighbour Cuckoo tells me he is just going ; and even little Nightingale will soon follow. To be sure, I have not wings like them, but I have legs nimble enough ; and, if I do not use them, I might as well be a mole, or a dormouse. I dare say I could easily reach to that blue ridge which I see from the tops of the trees ; which, no doubt, must be a fine place, for the

sun comes directly from it every morning, and it often appears all covered with red and yellow, and the finest colours imaginable. There can be no harm, at least, in trying; for I can soon get back again if I don't like it. I am resolved to go, and I will set out to-morrow morning."

When Squirrel had taken this resolution, he could not sleep all night for thinking of it; and, at peep of day, prudently taking with him as much provision as he could conveniently carry, he began his journey in high spirits. He presently got to the outside of the wood, and entered upon the open moors that reached to the foot of the hills. These he crossed before the sun was high; and then, having eaten his breakfast with an excellent appetite, he began to ascend. It was heavy toilsome work, scrambling up the steep sides of the mountains; but Squirrel was used to climbing; so, for a while, he proceeded expeditiously. Often, however, he was obliged to stop and take breath; so that it was a good deal past noon before he had arrived at the summit of the first cliff. Here he sat down to eat his dinner; and looking back, was wonderfully pleased with

the fine prospect. The wood in which he lived lay far beneath his feet, and he viewed with scorn the humble habitation in which he had been born and bred.

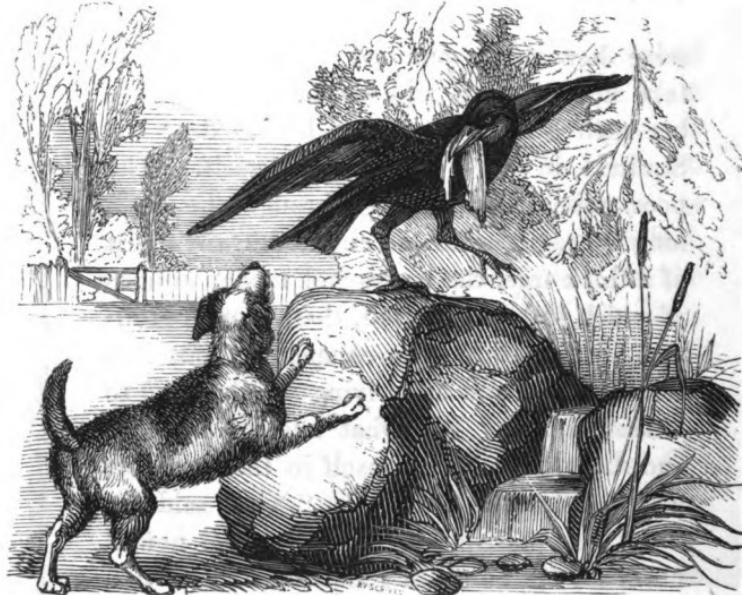
But when he looked forward, he was somewhat discouraged to observe that another hill rose above him, fully as distant as that to which he had already reached ; and he now began to feel stiff and fatigued. However, after a little rest he set out again, though not so briskly as before. The ground was rugged, brown, and bare ; and to his great surprise, instead of finding it warmer as he got nearer the sun, he felt it grow colder and colder. He had not travelled two hours before his strength and spirits were almost spent ; and he seriously thought of giving up the point, and returning before night should come on. While he was thus deliberating with himself, clouds began to gather round the mountain, and to take away all view of distant objects. Presently a storm of mingled snow and hail came down, driven by a violent wind, which pelted poor Squirrel most pitifully, and made him quite unable to move forwards or backwards. Besides, he had completely lost his road, and did not know

which way to turn towards that despised home, which it was now his only desire again to reach. The storm lasted till the approach of night, and it was as much as he could do, benumbed and weary as he was, to crawl to the hollow of a rock at some distance, which was the best lodging he could find for the night. His provisions were spent; so that, hungry and shivering, he crept into the farthest corner of the cavern, and rolling himself up, with his bushy tail over his back, he got a little sleep, though disturbed by the cold and the shrill whistling of the wind amongst the stones.

The morning broke over the distant tops of the mountains, when Squirrel, half frozen and famished, came out of his lodging, and advanced, as well as he could, towards the brow of the hill, that he might discover which way to take. As he was slowly creeping along, a hungry kite, soaring in the air above, espied him, and making a stoop, carried him off in her talons. Poor Squirrel, losing his senses with the fright, was borne away with vast rapidity, and seemed inevitably doomed to become food for the kite's young ones; when an eagle, who had seen the kite

seize her prey, pursued her in order to take it from her; and overtaking her, gave her such a blow as caused her to drop the Squirrel in order to defend herself. The poor animal kept falling through the air a long time, till at last he alighted in the midst of a thick tree, the leaves and tender boughs of which so broke his fall, that, though stunned and breathless, he escaped without material injury, and after lying awhile came to himself again. But what was his pleasure and surprise to find himself in the very tree which contained his nest! "Ah!" said he, "my dear native place and peaceful home! never let me be again tempted to leave you, lest I undergo a second time all the miseries and dangers from which I have now so wonderfully escaped!"





### The Dog and Raven.

*Dog.*—“ Stop thief! stop that villain, pray ;  
For the rascal’s flown away  
With my dinner, a large slice  
Of roast beef, so plump and nice.”

*Raven.*—“ Not so loud, pray, pretty dear,  
Let me whisper in your ear :  
I’ve been with the police, who  
Gave me orders to pursue  
And all stolen chattels seize ;  
So be quiet, if you please.”

The raven said this from sheer deceit,  
To steal from the dog his piece of meat.  
The dog said nothing of wrong or right ;  
To complain, indeed, was more than he durst,  
For he feared that it would come to light  
How he had stolen that meat at first.



### The Mother's Jewels.

 ORNELIA, a noble Roman lady, educated her children with the greatest care, and loved them with remarkable tenderness. One day another Roman lady paid her a visit, who talked much of her splendid dresses and jewels, and asked Cornelia what ornaments she possessed. The good mother kept her in conversation until her children came to receive their daily lesson. When they entered, she rose up and placed them before the stranger, saying, "Behold the jewels of Cornelia!"

Good children are indeed the choicest ornaments of their parents—more precious than the most costly pearls.



### The Fly and the Spider.

WO children once went with their grandmother to see a spider's web: they thought it very curious, and talked a good deal about it, though they could not see the use of such things, nor why there should be such creatures as spiders at all. Their grandmother replied, "My dear children, I cannot tell you just now the reasons why the all-wise God created and sustains the various creatures which we see around us, though we may be sure there is

some good end to be served ; but I will tell you a pretty story, which may at least help us to think upon the subject.

A young prince used often to wonder for what purpose God had made flies and spiders, as he could not see, he said, what use they were of to men, and, if he had the power, he would kill them all. One day, after a great battle, this prince was obliged to hide himself from his enemies ; and wandering about in a wood, he lay down very tired beneath a tree, and fell asleep. A soldier passing by, who belonged to the enemy, was quietly drawing near with his sword to kill the prince, when, all of a sudden, a fly stung his lip, and woke him. Seeing his danger, he sprang to his feet, and quickly made the soldier run off. That night the prince again hid himself in a cave in the same wood ; and during the night a spider wove her web across the entrance. Two soldiers belonging to the army which had defeated him, and who were looking for the prince, passed the cave in the morning ; and the prince heard their conversation :— “ Look ! ” cried one of them ; “ he is surely concealed in this cave.” “ No,” replied the other—“ that is impossible ; for if he had

gone in there, he would have brushed down the spider's web at the entrance." When they had gone away, the prince raised his hands and eyes to heaven, and thanked God for such goodness in yesterday saving his life by means of a fly, and now again by a spider, and acknowledged that the ways and works of God are perfectly good and wise.

Wretched and mean though flies and spiders seem,  
Yet even in them God's power and glory beam.



### The Swallow and Redbreast.

THE swallows at the close of day,  
When autumn shone with fainter ray,  
Around the chimney circling flew,  
Ere yet they bade a long adieu  
To climes where soon the winter drear  
Should close the unrejoicing year.  
Now with swift wing they skim aloof,  
Now settle on the crowded roof,  
As council and advice they take,  
Ere they the chilly north forsake.

Then one disdainful turn'd his eye  
Upon a Redbreast twitt'ring nigh,  
And thus began, with taunting scorn,—  
“ Thou household imp, obscure, forlorn,  
Through the deep winter's dreary day  
Here, dull and shiv'ring, shalt thou stay;  
Whilst we, who make the world our home,  
To softer climes impatient roam,  
Where summer still, on some green isle,  
Rests with her sweet and lovely smile :  
Thus, speeding far and far away,  
We leave behind the short'ning day.”

“ ‘Tis true,” the Redbreast answer'd meek,  
“ No other scenes I ask or seek ;  
To every change alike resign'd,  
I fear not the cold winter's wind.  
When spring returns, the circling year  
Shall find me still contented here ;  
But whilst my warm affections rest  
Within the circle of my nest,  
I learn to pity those that roam,  
And love the more my humble home.”



### The Traveller.

**T**RAVELLER once journeyed along a narrow path, on one side of which rose a high ridge of mountains, and on the other side a wide and deep river flowed. Suddenly he saw a fierce tiger rush down upon him from the mountain; and in order to escape the danger, he was just about to throw himself into the stream, and to swim for his life. But at that moment a crocodile darted up his head from the river, and opened his jaws to devour him. "O miserable me!" exclaimed the poor traveller; "whichever way I look, certain death stares me in the face;" and, full of despair and anguish, he sank powerless to the earth. The tiger, now almost upon him, made a sudden spring, and leaped—into the mouth of the crocodile!

In the greatest extremity, despair not. That which at first sight appeared a fatal calamity, serves unexpectedly to thy preservation.



## The Purse of Gold.

HERE was once a rich merchant in Italy, who, by bad management and extravagant living, lost all his fortune, and was reduced at last to great distress. This man had a son named Anthony, who had a wife, Isabella, and two little boys, whom he tenderly loved, and hoped to bring up well. But, alas! all his plans were overthrown by his father's ruin. He lost every thing, excepting his wife's little fortune which she brought him when she married. But although his own distress had been caused by his father's fault, he took him to his house, and, with his wife, did all he could to comfort and support him. The little estate which belonged to Isabella, and to which they trusted for their support, was on the banks of a river; and soon after his first trouble a furious storm of snow destroyed it, and Anthony saw all he possessed washed away by the rapid river, without power to prevent or repair the mischief which it did. All was now lost, and he had no means of supporting himself, his wife and children, or his father. He tried to get some employment

for himself, but every attempt was in vain. The friends, who had visited him while he was rich, now kept out of his way, and refused to help him; and he had one yet greater trouble still to bear. A man who pretended to be his friend, and promised to help him, and to get for him a situation by which he would be able to maintain his family, made known to Anthony, when he came to express his gratitude for his kindness, that he was only to be employed on condition of his agreeing to his wicked plans; and on his refusal to do this he was sent away, and this man became his most violent enemy, and did all he could to take away his character, and prevent him from obtaining any other employment. In this extreme distress, his wife sold nearly all her own clothes and those of her children, to get a little food for them. Two very poor friends now came forward to help them, but could not do much for them, on account of their own scanty means. At length, when all had been spent, and they had nothing to expect but starvation,—unable any longer to bear the sight of his father, who, oppressed by age and distress, was confined to his bed; of his little children, pale

and crying for food ; and of his wife, who was trying to stop her sobs lest they should add to his affliction,—Anthony rushed from his house, and despair gave him boldness to ask alms of the people whom he met in the streets ; but none would listen to him. “ O Heaven,” he cried, “ have mercy on my poor starving family ! ” As he walked on, with drooping head and sinking heart, he came suddenly upon something lying on the ground. Scarcely knowing what he did, he picked it up. It was a small pocket-book ; and when he opened it, he found a bank-note of a hundred crowns. “ O merciful Heaven ! ” he cried, in a transport of joy, “ Thou wilt not let us perish : my family will now be saved ! ” Joy gave him fresh strength, and with eager steps he was returning to his house to console his afflicted father, his weeping wife, and suffering children, when all at once he stopped short. The thought came into his mind,— “ This is not mine : what business have I with another’s money ? And yet—what must I do ? I cannot leave my darlings to perish ! But God is merciful ; He can find means to save us when all hope is gone. O God, I will not break Thy commandments ; I will

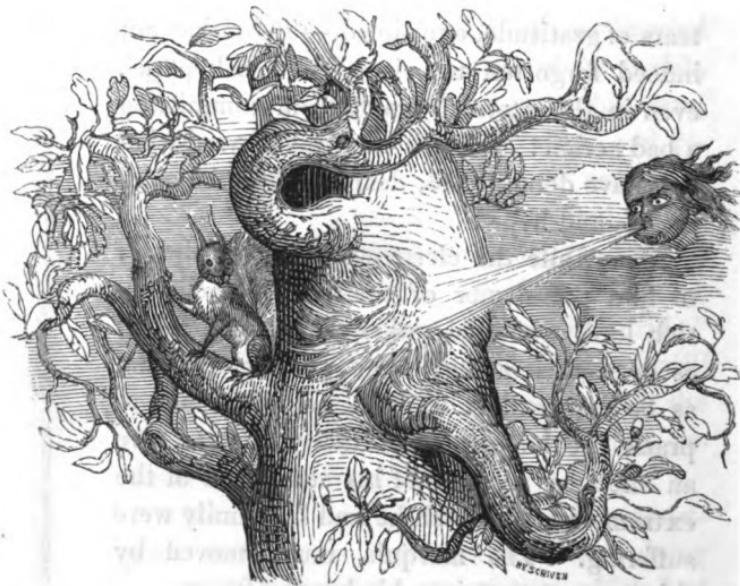
obey Thy laws." And saying this, he hurried to the house of the clergyman of the parish, and gave the pocket-book into his care, begging him to find out the owner and return it to him, and confessing the use which his great distress had at first tempted him to make of it. The good clergyman was much struck by his account. "God," said he, "will surely bless your honesty. This trifle," putting a small sum into his hand, "will keep your family from starving; and the owner of the pocket-book will, I trust, reward you handsomely for it."

Anthony, full of gratitude for this assistance, and that he had been kept from doing wrong in spite of the temptation which had been put in his way, hastened back to his house, and seemed like an angel of comfort to his father, wife, and children, whom he found in the greatest misery. He embraced them tenderly, saying,— "My father! my dearest wife! God has not quite forgotten us: in the extremity of trouble He has sent us help." And he told them how he had found the pocket-book, and how, after many struggles with himself, he had given it into the care of the clergyman. His wife, with

tears of gratitude, exclaimed,—“ God has not indeed forgotten us, since He has kept us, even in this state of want, from committing a bad action ! He will certainly reward what you have done. Yes, dear husband, be comforted, and hope ! ”

Meanwhile the clergyman exerted himself to find the owner of the pocket-book,—a rich lord, who had unknowingly dropped it as he walked along. The good clergyman, as he returned it to him, neglected not to praise the honesty of Anthony, and to give an affecting account of his state, and of the extreme misery which he and his family were suffering. The marquis, much moved by this account, put into his hands fifty crowns. “ Take this,” said he, “ to that good man, and I will use all my influence to get him honourably employed.” He kept his word, and Anthony was soon placed in the situation which had been promised him by his wicked friend, and able to support his family comfortably, and to bring up his children well.





### The Squirrel and the Wind.

*Squirrel.*—"Stop! stop! sir wind, how cold  
you blow!

No further through my house you'll go;  
For doors and windows I'll make fast  
Against your cold and cutting blast;  
Or move up stairs, quite round about."

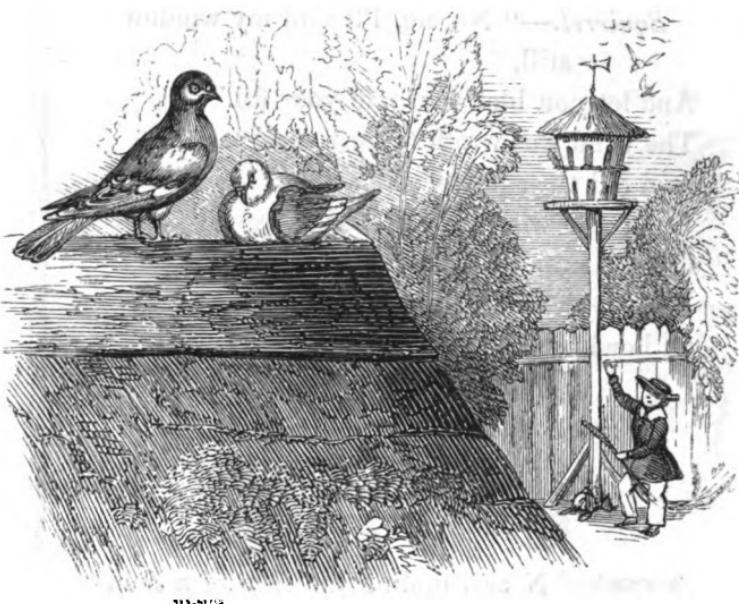
*Wind.*—"Oh, then I'm sure to find you  
out."

*Squirrel.*—“ No, no, I'll shut my window  
still,  
And let you blow and puff your fill.”  
The wind was wroth to hear such news,  
And did the squirrel sore abuse ;  
Who, safe within his shelt'ring tree,  
Crack'd nuts and jokes at liberty ;  
And let the wind pursue his trade  
Of howling through the forest-glade.



### The Ass in the Lion's Skin.

**A**N ass, finding the skin of a lion,  
put it on ; and, going into the  
woods and pastures, threw all  
the flocks and herds into ter-  
rible consternation. At last, meeting his  
owner, he would have frightened him also ;  
but the good man, seeing his long ears stick  
out, presently knew him, and, with a good  
cudgel, made him sensible that, notwith-  
standing his being dressed in a lion's skin,  
he was really no better than an ass.



### The Dove.

“ Dove, that sittest on yonder roof,  
Keeping from idle boys aloof;  
Say, why cooing for ever so,  
Turning your head aye to and fro ?”

*Dove.*—“ ‘Tis I’m so happy and full of glee,  
Happy as ever a dove can be ;  
For the Creator from heaven above  
Warms me with beams of light and love.

Therefore the dove on the house-top coos,  
And the boy below his play pursues ;  
Both in the sunshine glad at heart,  
Both in the gifts of God have part :  
Who from His throne looks down the while  
On His happy creatures with loving smile.



### The Angler and the Young Fish.

**A**MAN, angling in a river, caught a small perch, which, as he was taking it off the hook and going to put it into his basket, opened its mouth and began to implore his pity, begging that he would throw it into the river again. Upon the man's demanding what reason he had to expect such a favour : " Why," said the fish, " because at present I am but young and little, and consequently not so well worth your having as I shall be if you take me some time hence, when I am grown larger." — " That may be," replied the man ; " but I am not one of those fools who quit a certainty in expectation of an uncertainty ; so come along."



### The Peasant and his Horse.

**P**EASANT had an old worn-out horse, which he allowed to go about at his ease, taking care to put him into good grass-fields; and when in the stable, he gave him plenty of hay and fodder; in fact, he treated him with all the affection and respect that he would an old friend. A neighbour blamed him for this, and wondered that he should take such care of an old worn-out animal. The peasant replied, that the good man is merciful to his beast, and that his horse having served him and his family for many years, he felt it to be both a duty and a pleasure to provide for the poor brute's comfort and ease in his latter days.

### Concord.

Two neighbours lived in constant hate,  
Deceived as to each other's state  
By cunning lawyers, who make jars,  
And thrive by other people's wars ;  
No wonder therefore quarrels grow,  
When such the flames of discord blow.  
At last one party, tired of law  
By all he felt and all he saw,  
Took heart of grace, and with his son  
Went to propose a union  
Between him and the other's daughter,  
To end this strife of fire and water.  
“ But first,” he said, “ a bell we'll rear  
To spread the news both far and near ;  
And for its purchase let be given  
The sum for which so long we've striven,—  
CONCORD its name ; and when its sound  
First greets the ear in sweet rebound,  
Let youth and maid with solemn vow  
Before the holy altar bow.”  
And, see, the feud that long had raged  
By this wise plan at length assuaged ;  
And CONCORD's notes peal o'er the land  
The news of this bless'd marriage-band.  
  
Sweet CONCORD, what a voice hast thou  
To win the heart and smooth the brow !  
Did such glad bells more frequent sound,  
Earth soon were turn'd to holy ground.

## The Miller and his Treasure.



**F**T happened once that a miller, in his eagerness for riches, became impatient of his lot. He had nothing but the profits of his mill to support him ; but if these were small, they were certain : while it was kept going, he was

sure of food ; and he was even able to lay some money by for a future day. Yet still his acquisitions were not equal to his desires ; he only found himself above want, whereas he longed to be possessed of affluence. One day, as he was indulging these wishes, he was informed that a neighbour of his had found a pan of money underground, having dreamed of it three nights in succession. This news only aggravated the discontent of the poor miller. "Here am I," said he, "toiling from morning to night for a few paltry farthings, while my lucky neighbour goes quietly to bed, and dreams himself into thousands before morning. Oh, that I could dream like him ! With what pleasure would I dig round the pan ! how quietly would I carry it home ! not even my wife should

see me: and then the joy of thrusting one's hand into a heap of gold up to the elbow!"

Such reflections made the miller more and more unhappy. He discontinued his former assiduity; he was quite disgusted with his small gains, and his customers began to forsake him. Every day he repeated his wish, and every night laid himself down in order to dream. At last the wished-for vision came. He dreamed that under a part of the foundation of his mill there was concealed an immense pan of gold and diamonds, buried deep in the ground, and covered with a large flat stone. He concealed his good fortune from every person, as is usual in money-dreams, in order to have the vision repeated the two succeeding nights, by which he should be certain of its truth. His wishes in this also were answered; he dreamed of the same pan of money in the very same place. It was therefore now past a doubt: so, getting up early the third morning, he repaired, with a mattock in his hand, to the mill, and began to undermine that part of the wall to which the vision directed. The first thing he met with was a broken ring; digging still deeper, he turned up a house-tile, quite new and entire. At last, after much digging, he came to a broad, flat stone, but so large, that it was beyond man's strength to remove it. "There," cried he, in raptures, to himself, "there it is; under this stone there is

room for a very large pan of diamonds indeed. I must even go home to my wife, and tell her the whole affair, and get her to assist me in turning it up." Away he went therefore, and acquainted his wife with every circumstance of their good fortune. Her raptures on this occasion may easily be imagined ; she threw her arms round his neck and embraced him in an agony of joy. But these transports did not allay their eagerness to know the exact sum ; so, returning to the place where the miller had been digging, they found—not the expected treasure, but the mill, their only support, undermined and fallen !



### The Dancing Bear.

A BEAR, compell'd to frisk and dance,  
Tired of the task, refused to prance,  
And fled his tyrant's grasp. Alas !  
What suffering man brings to pass  
To feed his evil lust of gain—  
Fell source of sorrow, woe, and pain !  
Glad of his new-born liberty,  
His fellow-bears made jubilee ;  
And all the talk, for many a day,  
Was of their friend that ran away.

Of strange adventures, that befell  
In foreign lands, our bear could tell;  
For many a country he had seen,  
And danced on many a village-green;  
And when old times came o'er his mind,  
Although no friend to human kind,  
He glow'd with more than polar heat,  
And shew'd how dancing warms the feet.  
His friends and neighbours stared to see  
Such proofs of his agility,  
And fell a-dancing too, like him;  
Or tried it, rather—for each limb  
Refused to quit its ancient round,  
And stumbling smote the groaning ground.  
Their anger roused, the bearish race  
Chased him in dudgeon from the place.  
“ Fool !” cried they, “ he would wiser be  
Than all his glorious ancestry !”

GELLERT.



## The Bee.

" He that gathereth in summer is a wise son."

THE bee is at work among the flowers,  
Turning to profit the sunbright hours,  
Laying up honey and wax in store,  
Ere the bloomy sweets of the summer are o'er.

Ever she hummeth a cheerful song,  
As from blossom to blossom she speeds along ;  
For heavy and sad the sluggard may be,  
But merry and light is the diligent bee.

The dry little heath seems to yield to her  
Sweets that she doth to the rose prefer ;  
Nectar she sips from each tiny cell,  
Then deep she hides in the foxglove's bell.

It bends with her weight, but, as out she flies,  
Lightly as ever the flow'ret will rise,  
Fragrant and fresh, and as fair to see ;  
For she is no spoiler, the gentle bee !

Thou, who hast made both the bee and flower,  
And givest for labour the sunbright hour,  
Teach me *thus* to use every gift of Thine ;  
And the blessing that maketh rich be mine.

" The blessing of the Lord, it maketh rich, and He addeth no sorrow with it."

## The Horse and the Bell.

N a city in old times there was ordered to be erected a certain great bell for the especial use of individuals who might happen to meet with any grievous injuries, which they were to ring as loud as they could, for the purpose of obtaining redress. Now it so fell out, that the rope, in the course of time having been nearly worn away, a bunch of snakeweed had been fastened to it, for the convenience of the ringers. One day a fine old courser belonging to a knight, which, being no longer serviceable, had been turned out to run at large, was wandering near the place. Being hard pressed by famine, the poor steed seized hold of the snakeweed with his mouth, which caused the bell to sound pretty smartly. The council, on hearing the clamour, immediately assembled, as if to hear the petition of the horse, whose appearance seemed to declare that he required justice. Taking the case into consideration, it was soon decreed, that the same cavalier whom the horse had so long served while he was young, should be compelled to maintain him in his old age; and the king even imposed a fine in similar instances to the same effect.



### The Traveller and the Skylark.

*Traveller*.—"Lark, how early thy flight, and  
fleet,

Joyous the morning sun to meet!"

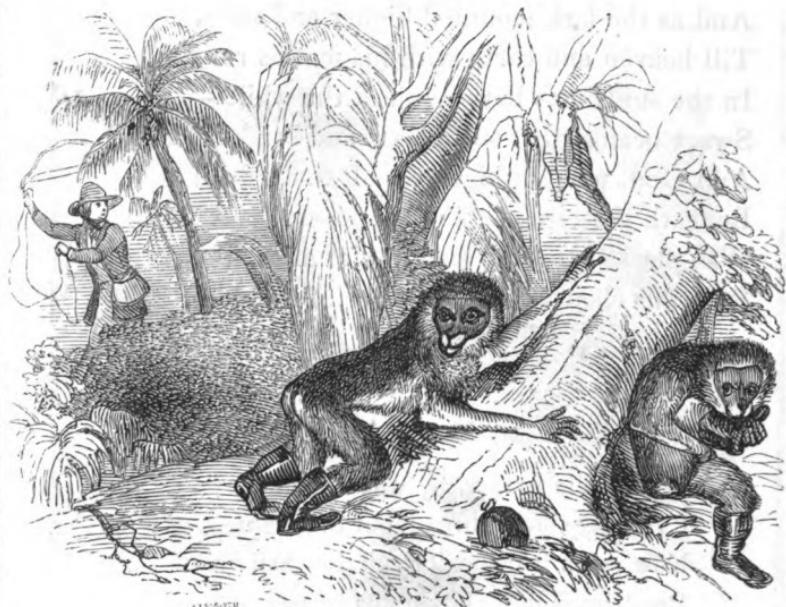
*Lark*.—"Yes; the praises of God I sing,  
Who gives me food and strength of wing:  
This is my use and wont of old.  
Traveller, do you by such customs hold?"

And as the lark mounted higher and sung,  
Till heaven and earth with his matins rung,  
In the sunbeams both rejoiced the while—  
Sweet beams, that so warmly and brightly smile !  
And God, who on high sees all that's done  
Beneath the circuit of stars and sun,  
Was pleased to hear such praise arise  
From his clear-voiced chorister of the skies.



### Morning Prayer for a Child.

O GOD the Father, by whose might  
I've safely slept throughout the night,  
Now morn is come, Thy praise shall be  
Proclaimed in joyful strains by me.  
JESUS, thou Son of God most high,  
Who for my sake didst deign to die—  
This day protect me and defend,  
And be my Saviour and my Friend.  
All-gracious SPIRIT, gift divine,  
Whose worth no words can e'er assign —  
Control each thought, and word, and deed,  
And safe through sin's temptations lead,  
Until at last, life's trial o'er,  
Through Thee I reach the heavenly shore.



### The Monkey and Boots.

“Boots,” thus spoke a monkey, “ever  
I have thought extremely clever;  
And their stateliness admired,  
And to try them long desired.  
What would now the people say,  
If I took to wear them, pray?—  
But what sounds are those I hear?  
It is the huntsman hastening near!”

Off with your boots!—no time to lose—  
And use your own well-fitting shoes,—  
Kind nature's gift, that never fail'd you  
Until the love of change assail'd you.  
Alas! the boots too tightly fit;  
The captive monkey must submit.



### The Lark.

WHAT is that, mother?

The lark, my child!  
The morn has but just look'd out and smiled  
When he starts from his grassy nest,  
And is up and away, with the dew on his breast  
And a hymn in his heart, to yon pure bright  
sphere,  
To warble it out in his Maker's ear!  
Ever, my child, be thy morn's first lays  
Tuned, like the lark's, to thy Maker's praise.





### The Great Book.

"Tis not in printed books alone  
That we must practise reading ;  
But Nature's book is Wisdom's own—  
Look up, the lessons heeding

That the heavens proclaim, in golden light,  
In fair array on the starry night.

In forms and hues of varied mien  
The clouds keep ever floating ;  
The careful reader hath often seen  
Their aspects, change denoting,  
As now far up they soar and sweep,  
And now o'er the valley lowly creep.

The mountains—how firm and fast they stand,  
In letters so large and stately !  
Seek where you will, by sea or land,  
The rest surpassing greatly ;  
Like giants transform'd to stone they look,  
Those mighty portions of Nature's book.

The plains can also lessons teach  
Of God's great power and glory ;  
The meanest flower His fame can preach ;  
And the river tells the story  
To the ocean deep, as it flows along,  
In murmurs of everlasting song.

That book can never be read to end  
In this life, so dark its portal ;  
Its contents all time and thought transcend—  
Fit theme for climes immortal :  
There we shall learn and praise aright  
The Author—a God of all power and might.





HEARKEN, for now the truth I'm singing,  
Eight o'clock its knell is ringing ;  
To bed let all your children creep—  
God will watch o'er them while they sleep.

And you, ye children, cease your bawling,—  
'Tis time on God's name to be calling ;  
The day is past, its sports are o'er,—  
Fall down and heavenly grace implore.

The stars above, in splendour glowing,  
God's power and love are ever shewing ;  
And angels every night keep guard,  
His faithful ones from harm to ward.



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